

WWD



The Bird on a Rock Necklace
A modern homage to the legendary Tiffany Diamond

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WWWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

Proenza's Pick

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A Bigger Navy

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What to Watch

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All for Women

"Venice is a woman," Diane von Furstenberg is fond of saying and the designer moved the DVF Awards to the city in 2022, staging them during the film festival driving additional visibility to the awardees. This year they included Christy Turlington Burns, seen here with DVF, for her organization Every Mother Counts. *For more on the event, and the film festival, see pages 10 to 14.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY EMILIO MADRID

FASHION

Rachel Scott Named Proenza Schouler's Creative Director

● The Jamaican American designer of Diotima is taking over the reins from founders Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez.

BY EMILY MERCER

Proenza Schouler is entering a new chapter with Rachel Scott at the helm.

On Tuesday, the American luxury brand revealed its appointment of Rachel Scott, founder and designer of Diotima, as its new creative director, overseeing all categories for the brand including mainline ready-to-wear, White Label, handbags and footwear. Her first presentation for the brand will debut in February 2026 with its fall 2026 collection. However, the industry will be introduced to the beginning of her conversation for Proenza Schouler at the upcoming New York Fashion Week as Scott worked closely with the brand's design studio as a consultant over the last few months to collaborate on the spring 2026 collection.

Scott will continue Diotima alongside her new role of overseeing creative director and will be presenting her latest collection for that label during NYFW.

Scott, who officially started with the brand on Aug. 15, succeeds Proenza Schouler founders Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez, who in January stepped down as creative directors of the brand they founded in 2002. Last March, Loewe confirmed that the duo would succeed Jonathan Anderson at Loewe, with plans to show their first collection during Paris Fashion Week in October.

As reported by WWD, the duo, who remain company shareholders and serve on the Proenza Schouler board, worked in tandem with Proenza Schouler chief executive officer Shira Suveyke Snyder to find a new creative lead for the brand.

"When we left Proenza Schouler last

January, we knew the story would go on but not yet who would write the next chapter. Rachel is someone whose work we have always admired. Her trajectory over the last few years has been impressive to watch. As founders and board members of the company, we are proud to welcome her to this very special brand and excited to see how she will embrace and evolve the legacy and spirit of what we started," Hernandez and McCollough said in a statement.

"Jack and Lazaro, as board members, helped along with the global search that we embarked – which started before their exit was even announced, we started having off-the-record conversations with talent," Suveyke Snyder told WWD in an exclusive interview. "It was really a journey to figure out exactly who was the right fit for Proenza. Having that right mix of someone who is going to bring a unique point of view, but also would really honor the codes and the legacy of what Jack and Lazaro started."

Suveyke Snyder added that finding a creative director who could continue the company's culture and work with the design studio, atelier and global teams in New York and Italy was of importance.

"I had met Rachel, interestingly at the [2024] CFDA Awards when both Proenza Schouler and Diotima were nominated for American Womenswear Designer of the Year. That's how she and I first connected. As I was embarking upon the search, I also knew we needed support in the studio for the upcoming collection, and I thought Rachel would maybe help out. She agreed and, as time progressed, I thought, 'Of course, there's so much in conversation in Diotima's language, Rachel's spirit and Proenza's language,' but as I started to see her work I thought, 'This could be a marriage made in heaven,' while knee-deep in search," Suveyke Snyder explained of asking Scott to work with the brand full time after she served as a consultant earlier this year. "Then things fell into place."

Suveyke Snyder said that while she had wonderful conversations with global talents while searching for the brand's new creative director, she and the board found Scott the "quintessential" person from the New York design community to carry forward the brand's "balance of European codes and American culture."

Suveyke Snyder noted that Scott fit the bill for the company's search for a creative director who had a strong understanding of its luxe American brand codes, current female audience and a vision of the woman the brand wants to speak to in the future. Furthermore, Scott's love of materials and strong ability to marry craft with innovation made her the natural choice to lead the brand forward, she said.

In addition, Suveyke Snyder noted the brand's new flagship on Mercer Street in SoHo, which opened in January, and re-imaged e-commerce platform have been successful and performing.

"It is an exciting time to have a new creative voice come into the organization as we look to expand our retail footprint," she said. "We're also excited to see how we think about expression of the brand online and how we continue to evolve that image online – seeing how Rachel influences that is exciting. We're embarking on this new chapter from a creative perspective, but also from a business strategy perspective. We're looking to talk to our customer, and I believe Rachel is going to inspire a new community of Proenza Schouler women."

Last year Scott took home the American Womenswear Designer of the Year award at the CFDA Fashion Awards and was awarded the CFDA Awards' Google Shopping American Emerging Designer of the Year honor in 2023 after launching her womenswear label Diotima just four years ago. The New York-based designer, who hails from Kingston, Jamaica, also received the Fashion Trust U.S. ready-to-wear award in 2025.

Since Diotima's inception, Scott has gained a steady and strong following for her inclusive, nuanced and authentic vision of Caribbean style through strong tailoring, knit dressing and sportswear with fringe, embellishment and strong handcrafted, artisanal details. She has been celebrated as one of the most exciting luxury brands to come out of New York City in recent years for her female led, modern and sensual fashions.

Prior to launching Diotima in 2021, Scott



Rachel Scott

studied fine art and French literature at Colgate University and fashion design at the Istituto Marangoni in Milan before starting her career at Costume National. She then moved to New York and cut her teeth at J.Mendel and Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen's contemporary label Elizabeth and James before joining Rachel Comey in 2015, where she worked her way up to vice president of design, ready-to-wear and footwear.

Amidst the ongoing musical chairs across luxury houses, Scott's appointment plays into a new generation of creative directors.

"This is an incredibly momentous moment for the industry – Rachel is an exciting new voice and offers a fresh vision embracing both craft and modernity," said Linda Fargo, senior vice president, fashion director and store presentation of Bergdorf Goodman. "To not only have Rachel continuing to design for Diotima, but now also extending her creative prowess and leadership to Proenza Schouler is an inspiring and exciting time for our customers. We could not be more proud of Rachel and the opportunity for her to lead this significant new era for Proenza Schouler."

"I think it's amazing to bring on a female creative director and to be able to see how she takes this brand forward. We set out the search to find the best person for the job and we're delighted that it's Rachel. We're excited to see what a female will bring to Proenza Schouler, and how the subtle differences in fit, technique or the way she thinks of a woman's body or lifestyle – those nuances, we're excited to see what that brings," Suveyke Snyder said. "We're ready to get going, and are so excited for February."

BUSINESS

J.McLaughlin Aims to Elevate Its Storytelling

● The classic American brand known for its vibrant prints and cozy neighborhood stores has formed a new team to accelerate growth.

BY DAVID MOIN

J.McLaughlin intends to "amplify" its brand image and storytelling and has a new team on the case.



From J.McLaughlin's fall 2025 campaign.

In July, Greg Unis, former president of the Victoria's Secret and Pink divisions of Victoria's Secret & Co., became chief executive officer, and recently, Lee Anne Henrico became chief creative officer, a broad new role at the brand in which she will oversee women's and men's design, product conception and creative marketing and communications. She reports to Unis.

Previously, Henrico served as senior vice president of design at the Vancouver, Canada-based Aritzia fashion chain. Before that, she spent more than a decade at Victoria's Secret until 2020, most recently serving as senior vice president and creative director.

On Tuesday, Unis indicated that Henrico will shape the brand's creative vision and seasonal storytelling to help grow J.McLaughlin, which turns 50 next year.

Kevin McLaughlin, cofounder of the brand along with his brother Jay, is remaining with the company on a full-time basis, but will no longer hold the title of chief creative officer, according to Unis.

"Kevin is still very involved," he said. "His role has not changed. He's involved in the general brand positioning and product."

Unis also said McLaughlin will continue as a board member and in "guiding the brand...Lee Anne and I are both leveraging him in so many different ways," he said. Jay McLaughlin left the company years ago.

On Friday, J. McLaughlin launches its new fall campaign, "Hello Fall, We Love You," which will run through September and October. It's Henrico's first initiative at the company and was photographed in the Cobble Hill area of Brooklyn by Terence Connors, and in Millbrook, N.Y., by Jeff Allen. The campaign is rooted in the brand's origins, features local spots, dogs and artists, and is considered a "360-degree" effort since it involves the catalogue, stores, paid digital/CTV, influencer activation, organic/paid social and retail events.

"Lee Anne has an exceptional ability to create product that inspires and to tell stories that resonate," said Unis. "Her leadership will bring fresh creative energy to

the brand while staying true to our DNA."

Said Henrico, "J.McLaughlin is a brand with a rich heritage, distinct identity and strong connection to its customers. I look forward to building on that foundation to craft collections and experiences that feel both timeless and fresh."

When he was named J.McLaughlin's new CEO, succeeding Mary Ellen Coyne, who joined J.Jill, Unis told WWD, "We'll scale the business, and drive creativity across all areas – product, marketing and customer experience. We've put together a strategic plan for the next three to five years. It's a comprehensive, long-range plan in terms of brand, product, marketing, the customer, stores and digital, that gives us a map of where we're working toward."

Unis spoke of "amplifying who we are as a brand – that's the starting point and then it's about bringing together talent, [forming] new partnerships and collaborations, with people or brands that have a kind of a shared DNA, and connect with our kind of customer, but just in a broader way, in product categories that we're not in. There's a range of things we're thinking about, always with two things in mind. Would it be capturing a new customer, or would it be about entering into categories you're not already in?"



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The Bird on a Rock Necklace
A modern homage to the legendary Tiffany Diamond

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Claudia Schiffer and Mariacarla Boscono in Donna Karan New York ad campaign.



Irina Shayk and Imaan Hammam for the campaign.

FASHION

Donna Karan New York Fetes 40th Anniversary

• Its latest campaign showcases timeless, sensual designs and connections featuring multigenerational supermodels.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Donna Karan New York, which marks its 40th anniversary this fall, will celebrate with five women who embody the enduring femininity of the brand.

Claudia Schiffer, Irina Shayk, Imaan Hammam, Liya Kebede and Mariacarla Boscono feature in the fall campaign, which was photographed in London by Mikael Jansson. The campaign shares the conversations that women have with each other, reflecting the strength, complexity and style of women today.

"As we reflect on this milestone, we're reminded of the brand's timeless, forward-thinking vision — one that remains as relevant today as ever. We are deeply grateful to Claudia, Liya, Irina, Mariacarla and Imaan for bringing to life a multifaceted, multigenerational portrait of Donna Karan," said Jeff Goldfarb, executive vice president of G-III Apparel Group, which owns the brand.

Reinterpreting archival and classic silhouettes, the collection highlights sophisticated fabrics through such shades as deep brown and chocolate plum and cool metallics.

Schiffer appears in a devore velvet look or a draped knit dress, belted and worn with a faux fur vest. Kebede wears python-effect and suede outerwear over fluid pieces. Shayk dons tailored styles, while Boscono shifts between a silk gathered dress and a monochromatic ensemble of a belt knit cape and unstructured pants. Hammam is shot in a leather and a silk jacquard skirt, as well as a cowl-necked gown of gold paillettes.

In the campaign, accessories, including sunglasses, are featured including sculptural bags and footwear with signature hardware.

Under the creative direction of Trey Laird, the campaign will appear across all Donna Karan New York social channels, as well as digital platforms, print placements

and premium outdoor displays across key markets. The campaign was styled by Jessica Diehl, with hair by Damen Boissinot and makeup by Mark Carrasquillo. Natalie Paul shot the behind-the-scenes and still-life images.

The collection will be available in North America at select retailers starting Wednesday and on donnakaran.com.

In an interview, Laird said that over the past few seasons they've been establishing the "comeback of the brand, which has really taken off." After relaunching with a tableau of supermodels for the first two seasons, they featured Kate Moss last season, "which was amazing, but we decided that there was something really special about the women connecting with each other, so we cast five women from different generations," Laird said.

He said Schiffer had walked in many of Karan's shows and she did an early campaign with the brand with Steven Meisel in the 1990s, so it's her second campaign. Boscono is a muse for many designers. Shayk "is so powerful and strong and confident and bold, and I'd always wanted to do something with her and Donna Karan," Laird said. Then they asked back Kebede and Hammam, who were in Donna Karan New York's launch campaign. Hammam is also the face of the Donna Karan's Cashmere Mist eau de parfum campaign.

He said the campaign was shot over two days in London, "which happened to be the place that was easiest to coordinate all the women."

"The whole collection were these beautiful shades of brown from this sort of taupe-y color to this very rich sort of plummy chocolate, and it was based on archive velvets and jerseys that Donna had originally done in collections from some of the early 2000s, and they reissued this beautiful brown color," Laird explained.

They had brown banquettes made with a very minimal set with a golden floor, "and we kept moving it around and mixing it up. All the women are in different combinations and they're interacting with each other. We're calling it 'Woman to Woman' which

was an iconic Donna-ism," Laird said.

In social interviews, they each interview each other. "We thought there was something to the different generations connecting together. Mariacarla would ask Claudia questions and then Claudia would ask her questions," he said. The age range of the models is from Hammam, who is 28, to Schiffer, who is 54.

They also did videos of the different combinations of women which go out on the brand's social channels and the models' channels. Videos will appear on such platforms as YouTube and TikTok.

In addition to the brown tones, they also shot the signature black and gold. "But the new seasonal fashion statement is all shades of brown," Laird said. They've also reissued one of Karan's archival devore velvets. "I think they call it plum chocolate," Laird said.

Describing the experience on set, Laird said, "Some of them knew each other well, and some hadn't met each other. So, for instance, Imaan had never met Claudia Schiffer and she's such a legend and such an icon, so Imaan fanned out over that, but at the same time, Claudia and Mariacarla

Liya Kebede is featured in the fall ad campaign for Donna Karan New York.



realized that the first time they had ever worked together was actually with Mikael Jansson." He said that models don't always have that opportunity to connect when they're of different generations. "There's such genuine admiration and respect for everybody's contributions and their role in fashion," he said.

Laird said the collection is multigenerational as well. "I think we've been surprised to see such a range of women. Some women remember Donna Karan, which had been out of circulation for 10 years....There's a customer who remembers who's now back but then at the same time, it's being introduced to a new generation of customers who may never have worn it before."

He said Nordstrom is a key partner, as is Macy's. "I think it's been interesting to deliver a really strong iconic signature fashion look that's very timely again, but at a more accessible price that can attract a different and bigger audience."

He said he visited the department store floors when Donna Karan New York was first relaunched "and it looks so different than everything around it. It really holds up...it really stands the test of time. It looks so flattering on so many types of women and so many different ages and body types. It really is a testament to her [Donna Karan] and her design ingenuity and the language, the brand and DNA she created," Laird said.

Laird thinks the "Woman to Woman" theme is very relevant. "A lot of the women talked about inspiring women in their lives, whether that was their mother, daughter or best friend. Everybody can connect with that. It's inspiring to me to see how connected and inspired they are about the women in their lives. That was always a very important part of the Donna Karan brand DNA. Different brands are known over time for different things. Some brands are overly sexual, some brands are very Parisian and some brands are all about leather.

"I think Donna was always about strength and sensuality and women designing for another woman and understanding what she's looking for and what makes her feel comfortable and glamorous and feel confident," Laird said.



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The Bird on a Rock Turquoise Necklace
A tribute to the House's gemstone legacy

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FASHION

Post Malone Debuts Fashion Label in Paris

- The musician demonstrated his passion for Western style, even sending a horse onto the runway for the finale.

BY MILES SOCHA

Post Malone has officially tossed his 10-gallon hat into the international fashion ring, along with snap-front denim shirts, fringed leather jackets, coaster-sized belt buckles – and a horse, which ferried his finale look onto the runway and left a small, scented souvenir.

On Monday night in Paris, the American rapper and singer unveiled his Austin Post collection at the mansion Karl Lagerfeld once called home, painting his AP logo onto a courtyard wall, clinking bottles of Bud Light with buddies in the garden afterward and posing for photos with swarms of fans, one insisting he cradle her baby.

“It’s something I’ve always wanted to do. And I figured, why the hell not right now?” Malone replied when asked why he decided to enter the fashion business. “I think that the product that me and the team have created is really special and speaks to me, and I’m super f-king excited.”

Speaking to a small clutch of reporters, the musician said his Season 1 collection represents “what I would wear now.”

“I’m 30 years old, man,” he enthused. “And it’s actually tough stuff. So, you know, I’ve worked in the denim and the denim is made in the United States.”

Malone is currently in Europe on his “Big Ass World Tour,” with a show scheduled for Wednesday night at La Défense Arena in Paris.

You could picture the “Congratulations” and “Sunflower” singer taking to the stage



A look from Post Malone's fashion show in Paris.

in the taut jeans with a pony-skin Jacron, studded velvet blousons and cowboy boots with spurs, a collaboration with famed Texas bootmaker Lucchese.

For eyewear, Malone collaborated with Los Angeles-based Jacques-Marie Mage, whose founder Jérôme Mage shares his passion for turquoise jewelry and other elements of the American Southwest.

The musician allowed that his take on western style – recently revived by Pharrell Williams with his fall 2024 men's collection for Louis Vuitton, and Beyoncé Knowles-Carter with her “Cowboy Carter” album and tour – is an elevated one,

strong on embellishments like fringe and medallion conchos.

That said, Malone said his Austin Post brand – that's his offstage name – would cost less than luxury labels.

“Because, you know, I'd like people to actually wear it and enjoy it and cherish a piece that they bought for years and years and years to come,” he said.

While there were more cowboy hats, jean jackets and facial tattoos than you usually see at a Paris runway event, the Austin Post show attracted a good swath of top, Paris-based editors, a smattering of rappers including A\$AP Nast and Django,

and retailers including Printemps, Vier, Dover Street Market and Cabinet Noir.

WWD spotted Selfridges executive Bosse Myhr, who cited increased consumer interest in the aesthetic Malone is playing.

“We’re seeing high demand for tones of denim blue, cotton beige and earthy browns, which speaks to the traction this trend is having and the potential for it to continue building,” said Myhr, director of menswear, womenswear and childrenswear at Selfridges. “I thought it was a great show – very of-the-moment, with a real sense of authenticity in how it engaged with Americana and Western cowboy culture.

“What’s exciting now is the shift away from a pared-back luxury look toward something more expressive and rooted in cultural storytelling,” he added.

Asked in the scrum why he chose Paris to unveil his fashion venture, Malone replied: “Well, I love this f-king town.” That said, no Opéra Garnier for him.

“We went to WWE last night, and it was so much fun because, you know, bring a little body slam into Paris,” he said, referring to the wrestling spectacle, also held at La Défense Arena. “I think it’s so much fun to be here. I don’t get to come as often as I’d like, but I’ve made so many beautiful memories here, and we figured, why not bring the Bud Light and the shenanigans to Paris.”

In tandem with his Paris debut, Malone has a temporary pop-up at Words Sounds Colors & Shapes, a boutique in the Marais district, and he’s plotting a New York presentation on Sept. 19 and 20 to launch his Foundation Collection, described as “a permanent line of tailored silhouettes inspired by Austin’s own wardrobe.”

EXCLUSIVE

Valentino Campaign Explores Intimacy, Identity

- Clairo is among the talents fronting the campaign photographed by Glen Luchford.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN – Alessandro Michele does not want speed to be part of his vocabulary.

Valentino’s creative director turned once again to his longtime collaborator Glen Luchford to photograph the brand’s fall 2025 campaign, unveiled exclusively with WWD, and penned a letter to say that “nowadays fashion is more and more an expression of a hypertrophic and accelerated world, stubbornly pursuing the promise of novelty: new forms, new traces, new stories.”

Michele is aiming to go in a different direction, as he did with his pre-fall campaign for Valentino urging a return to a more long-lasting gaze.

“In such a whirlwind, I chose to dwell in a different gesture: not running, but lingering,” Michele continued in his letter. “Not opening a new chapter, rather delving into a theme already unfolding. I chose not to consume the latest thing. Rather, I decided to let the images and the interrogations sediment and grow within a vertical excavation.”

He referenced the topics of the fall show, dubbed “Le Méta Théâtre Des Intimités” and held in Paris in March, “to continue questioning the close relationship between identity and robing

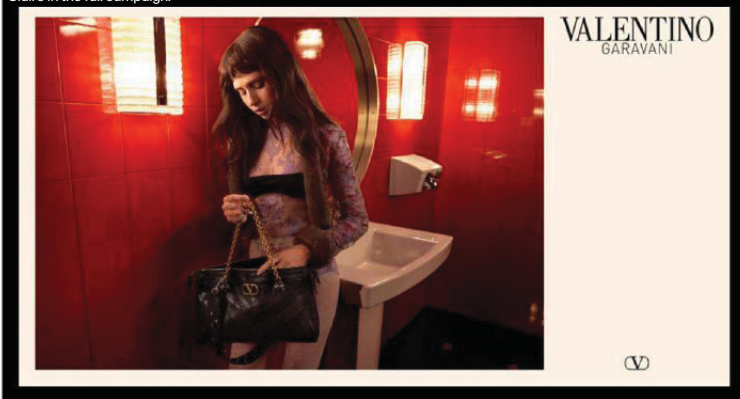
practices. Here comes the public bathroom again: a counter-place where private and relational dimension mingle, where the visible challenges the invisible, where decency collides with guilty pleasure and exposure flirts with occultation. It’s a liminal space that, in this campaign, becomes enriched with new bodies, gazes and encounters, becoming an unflinching scene of possibilities.”

The campaign is fronted by American singer-songwriter Clairo, who is also a Valentino brand ambassador; American interdisciplinary artist and rock musician Kembra Pfahler; Aimée Byrne; Isabella Pascucci; Shane Stevens; Hana Janata; Saniqwe Dill; Weiyi Fang; Bukwop Kir; Paul Scally, and Giuseppe Cirillo.

The talents are seen posing in a public bathroom with red and black tiles, reproducing the set of Michele’s sophomore Valentino ready-to-wear show, staged in a giant public toilet bathed in red light. In his show notes at the time, the designer described the space as “dystopian, disturbing, Lynchian.”

Conceiving the campaign, Michele argued that “it was like imagining a life after the show: How many other existences could that uncanny and choral

Clairo in the fall campaign.



space host? How many other unspoken desires could take shape there? And which different intimacies would be reflected in its corridors?”

Indeed, in March the designer told WWD the show was about exploring the performative nature of intimacy, and the way we construct our identity through clothes.

“We know, fashion has always been a language of appearance, a device that stages bodies and exposes them to the gaze. Even in our most intimate dimension we can’t escape such exhibiting nature,” Michele continued in the letter.

He believes the late historian and philosopher Hannah Arendt “had it perfectly clear: being and appearing coincide, it’s what frames our very existence in the world. Accordingly, clothes certify their status of second skin, the means through which we decide to show ourselves on the stage of life.”

The designer concluded that “it may be just this, fashion’s most valuable legacy: depth showing itself as an interweaving of surfaces and intimacy revealing its political and poetic strength. Not at all motionless essence, but endless motion. Not a private shelter, but a shared scene.”



The new Old Navy handbag collection.

An Old Navy Romantic handbag.



Zac Posen

EXCLUSIVE

Zac Posen Talks Old Navy Handbags And Gap Inc. Gig

● Gap Inc.'s largest division has launched an expanded, versatile collection of bags.

BY DAVID MOIN

Old Navy, renowned for its flip-flops, is taking accessories to another level with an expanded and reimagined handbag collection.

And Zac Posen, Gap Inc.'s executive vice president and creative director and Old Navy's chief creative officer, has been eager to get it off the ground. "This is definitely something early on when I got here, a year and a half ago, that I really wanted to put at the forefront, and something that our customers told us we needed," Posen told WWD.

"For me, when looking to elevate Old Navy style for our customers, an accessory is an incredibly accessible way to attain a style. It doesn't require fit. It can be a keepsake. It can be a pass-me-down. It can elevate the everyday outfit, and just give it that elevated zhuzh."

The handbag assortment, which launched Wednesday, offers styles for a variety of occasions, day and night, and includes three groups:

- The Carrie Collection, which is a tribute to the late fashion editor and longtime Old Navy campaign star Carrie Donovan and has three silhouettes: a large Carrie tote, a medium Carrie tote, and the Carrie crossbody. Each style comes in a variety of colors, soft faux leather and smooth faux suede. Prices range from \$29.99 to \$44.99.
- The Prep Collection offers the small Prep crossbody, the Prep shoulder bag, and the large Prep bucket bag, each accented in gold hardware and in soft faux leathers, rich tones in solids or color blocking, and a stamped croc inspired version for the shoulder bag. Prices range from \$24.99 to \$39.99.
- The Romantic Collection, designed for a night out, offers the Romantic clutch and the Romantic bracelet bag, in faux suede and gold hardware accents, both priced \$29.99



An Old Navy Prep handbag.



"Every piece is thoughtfully designed with clean lines, great proportions and materials that feel elevated without being overworked," Posen said. The Carrie tote he considers a standout. "It's simple, structured and effortless, the kind of bag you can carry every day, but that still gets noticed."

His second favorite is the Prep collection's bucket bag. "It's really chic. There's a mini bucket bag. And I'd say my third favorite is this little evening clutch in suede with this metal ring. It's really sleek and sexy looking."

"I did not sketch the collection. It has been a real collaborative effort working with the accessories team and designers in-house, along with merchandising and planning. It's been very much a team effort."

Noting Old Navy's history with flip-flops, Posen said they've been "part of our DNA....We definitely have accessories, but this launch is a much more expanded stamp on accessories. We've had accessories in the past, but it's never been its own section, at least since I've been here, in terms of giving it space within the stores. It's something we think can grow and facilitate."

He said the bags are intended to accompany other categories at Old Navy, including denim. "As we move forward into more sportif bags, we'll be looking at how those sit with our Bounce fleece, as well as the rest of our activewear business, which has been growing substantially. It's like the best kept secret in the industry."

Posen said there will be a series of drops over time to augment the collection. "This is really about movement," he said. "It keeps rolling out, so we keep it exciting and fresh."

Noting that every handbag in the new collection is priced under \$50 – most around \$30 – Posen said: "Style should not have a price tag. Having good style and taste should be something that is accessible, and actually great style should fight price....For me, a great bag is always about how it sits on the shoulder, having the drop in the right

place, and how it holds your stuff."

Posen has been recognized for his designer-level creations and evening looks, but his reputation widened when he joined Gap Inc. Asked if it's tougher to design down market for the masses now, he replied: "At any price point, the magic of putting something made and sewn together always would have challenges. I would say there's no such thing as 'bibbidi-bobbidi-boo' in making anything from high luxury to something that is very accessible. This is part of what gets me up every day and keeps me up at night. It's thinking about all those components that get put together in the role that I sit in today. Obviously there's a lot more facets to that. It's not just the design and making [the products.] I work across a myriad of different sides of the company, and that keeps it exciting for me. I wear many hats within Gap Inc. It keeps me very busy."

He said his first foray at Old Navy was over a year ago, working on the 94 Collection, which was the brand's reissue of some of its best styles of 1994, to celebrate Old Navy's 30th birthday. He said he "hit the ground" working across the brand on product, marketing and other areas at Old Navy. Among the projects he worked on was a line of occasion dresses, such as for proms or weddings, as well as Old Navy denim ads featuring Precious Lee and activewear ads that featured Lindsay Lohan and other celebrities.

"We're working on different kinds of stores of the future," he said. "You know we announced Herald Square," where Old Navy is returning to a new site, after closing at a site being taken over by Primark. "We have so much in the pipeline. It's such an exciting time for Old Navy."

Asked what's the very next big thing coming out of Old Navy after the accessory collection, Posen said, "Oh my gosh. We have a really exciting project with a very iconic American woman designer. I can't disclose who yet."



 ROBERTO COIN



Christy Turlington Burns, Kim Kardashian Receive DVF Awards

They spoke of the projects close to their hearts, of creating connections, visibility, kindness and advocacy. BY LUISA ZARGANI PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILIO MADRID

VENICE – “Diane has a halo effect,” said Christy Turlington Burns on Thursday morning ahead of receiving a DVF Award that same evening for her humanitarian work with the organization she founded 15 years ago, Every Mother Counts.

Turlington Burns was flanked by her daughter, Grace, and Diane von Furstenberg, sitting on an animalier-printed sofa in one of the designer’s salons in the 15th-century Palazzo Giustinian Brandolini on the Grand Canal, brimming with myriad family portraits, art works and memorabilia from her travels around the world.

“Calvin [Klein] would be horrified,” von Furstenberg quipped, in a nod to the minimalist taste of the American designer, who helped propel Turlington Burns’ career in fashion.

However, it was not her supermodel stardom that was the focus of the exclusive interview and cover photo shoot with von Furstenberg, but the nonprofit company Turlington Burns set up and dedicated to making pregnancy and childbirth safe for all mothers. This is a very personal project stemming from a postpartum hemorrhage after the birth of Grace in 2003. The award would be bestowed on Turlington Burns later that night by her daughter, who praised her mother for “looking outward” following the near-death experience.

Asked about her popularity in helping to spread the message, she admitted “it hasn’t hurt for sure, but I think what’s more important is just to get the door open or have a phone picked up. But I think what I’m most proud of is the way that I approached this work from my experience. I went back to school to study public health and I really wanted to understand what was needed, how I could be an added value in this conversation.”

Von Furstenberg praised Turlington Burns’ “serious approach, she gets s-t done. We know that to inspire is about storytelling. You tell your story, but what is most important and inspiring is not the fact that you were a supermodel or successful, but what happened to you and how you did it.”

She explained that a goal of the awards is “to give grants and visibility to extraordinary women who have the courage to fight, the strength to survive and the leadership to inspire. I could just give them checks, but the idea of giving them visibility is also very important, so it’s also nice to have people who will bring this because there are always maybe three people that the public doesn’t really know. They all do extraordinary things, but some have more visibility, and by including them, you give visibility to the other women who are not well known.”

In fact, the 16th edition of the awards also honored Kim Kardashian for her work as a criminal justice advocate; Sudanese activist and Emergency Response Room leader Hanin Ahmed; general coordinator of COICA and defender of Indigenous and environmental rights Fany Kuiru Castro, and Giulia Minoli, president of Italian foundation Una Nessuna Centomila, dedicated to contrasting violence against women.

“Early on, when I started my maternal health work, you gave me the opportunity to speak in your home to a group of women, opening up your circle and your network, giving me a platform to be able to share my work,” Turlington Burns said. ▶



Diane Von Furstenberg and Christy Turlington Burns

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL **WWD**



Grace Burns and Christy Turlington Burns

“We pay more for health care per capita than any other developed nation in the world, and we have the worst outcomes.”

CHRISTY TURLINGTON BURNS

“One of the things that is most important is to create connections and I always talk about that because I would like to inspire everyone to do it,” von Furstenberg said. “Every morning, I try to make a miracle by introducing someone to someone who can change their life and who [they] would not have met without me. You don’t need to speak. You don’t need to say anything, all you need to do is focus on introducing one person to a person in a way that you’re going to get their attention. And everyone can do that.”

“What I’ve always preached is to be in charge,” she continued. “But to be in charge is first and foremost to be true to yourself. You can’t do anything unless you’re true to yourself. Own your imperfections, they become your assets and that’s what I always advocated for. Recently, now that I’m an older woman, I advocate the power of kindness, because I realized that kindness is a currency, and just like money, it compounds, and generosity is the best investment.”

“When I first started working on maternal health, the hope was to connect, like Diane was saying, and then to try to come together in a more united sort of force, and raising awareness was central to the mission,” Turlington Burns said.

“There are new audiences every day who are learning about the challenges that women face when they’re bringing life into the world, but we also have an opportunity to invest in community-based solutions. There are incredible women, largely, approximately 90 percent of our grantees are women that are actually exemplifying

models of care that are what women need and want. They’re respected, they feel safe, they feel seen in their communities. And so it’s been really important for us to lift up those individuals, those models of care, and we do that through filmmaking and storytelling.”

After the first film “No Woman, No Cry” in 2010, Every Mother Counts launched in 2015 the “Giving Birth in America” series and Turlington Burns is executive producing the documentary “Perilous Passage: Birth in America” with a Paramount company called Republic Pictures.

“We are hopeful that it will debut before the midterm elections [in America], again to continue to keep maternal health top of mind, looking at the impact of an already very precarious maternal health state in the U.S. post-rescinding of Roe v. Wade [via the Supreme Court’s] Dobbs decision, reversing rights that women have been working so hard to fight for, and that will actually have a deep impact that we can’t even see just yet in terms of the numbers of mortality and trauma as a result of those very, very draconian policies,” she said. “We hope to influence policy-change as well, because that still is a lever for change in the way that kindness is a currency.”

She lamented an increase in childbirth mortality in the U.S. since the ‘80s, “We have a problem around race that has made access to care and quality of care very different for women of color. Even women of color with a college education have a higher chance of dying in childbirth than an uneducated white woman, and that is shocking. We pay more for health care per capita than any

other developed nation in the world, and we have the worst outcomes.”

Turlington Burns has made Every Mother Counts her main job and her “third child,” following the birth of Grace’s brother Finn. She has traveled around the world supporting the organization and said it has partners in 31 U.S. community-based grantee organizations and 18 global grantees (nine countries around the world total): Tanzania, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Guatemala, Haiti and U.S. “I find that I get the most inspiration by being physically right there,” she said. “Once people have experienced the work we’re supporting, they are lifetime supporters, they advocate, they donate, they share stories. When you bring people together, the most surprising things happen. When possible, we also deal with policy-makers, ministers of health, sometimes prime ministers or presidents.”

The DVF Awards were created in 2010 by the designer and the Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation to recognize and support extraordinary women who are dedicated to transforming and inspiring the lives of other women, granting each honoree \$100,000 for their nonprofit organization in order to further their work.

Over the years, the DVF Awards have amplified the voices of women from more than 30 countries with grants to further their work in the areas of climate change, immigration and fighting human trafficking, among others.

Von Furstenberg has been staging the awards in Venice since 2022, a city she loves and compares to a woman, “mastering the art of solution, seduction and resilience over the years. For the winter of my life, I decided to live several months a year in this beautiful palazzo I walked into when I was 19 [with her first husband Prince Egon von Furstenberg, the nephew of Countess Cristiana Brandolini d’Adda, sister of the late Fiat tycoon Gianni Agnelli], and I had never seen anything so glamorous in my life. I think it would be nice to make Venice the Republic of Kindness.”

The yearly awards have been timed to coincide with the Venice Film Festival, which has helped to bring added visibility, just as choosing high-profile honorees or presenters, ranging from Hillary Rodham Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Oprah Winfrey and

Amal Clooney.

Cue Kardashian, with her 355 million Instagram followers and successful business ventures, such as Skims. “People know so much about Kim, but they don’t see the prison work she does. I checked it out and she does unbelievable, real work.”

Von Furstenberg decided to ask Chris Young to present Kardashian with the award for added meaning. Young was freed after Kardashian’s advocacy and clemency from U.S. President Donald Trump four years ago. He had received a life sentence for a lower level drug offense in 2014 exactly on Aug. 28 but von Furstenberg believes “this is not a coincidence. ‘God comes incognito,’ said Einstein. It’s energy and we have to believe in energy because we are now fighting against such mediocrity and greed, which makes it a very, very hard soup to drink.”

Later on Thursday, Kardashian, wearing Maison Margiela, spoke about how she discovered law “about seven years ago when I wanted to help get someone out of prison for the first time. I think I was really naive to our justice system, and I didn’t really know how it worked until I really did the work and got in and saw what was going on. Justice reform is a new path that I’m just figuring out and wanting to figure out how to change policies. He was the second person I went into the White House for after Alice Johnson to ask for his clemency. We didn’t get it that way, but we didn’t stop. We got it through other avenues of the courts. And any chance that I get to tell people’s stories, I love that opportunity.”

Kardashian said she never worried about balancing her public persona with her activism or that people would not take her seriously. “I think you just have to focus. When I first went to the White House, I thought, ‘Now do I have to start dressing differently and posting what I post differently?’ And absolutely not. I want people to see the work that I do and maybe relate to the stuff that I do that’s not my advocacy work, and then maybe be intrigued by that. I think you just have to be yourself. Fight for what you believe in. And I think people, anytime something is really authentic to who you are and what you’re fighting for, you just have to be yourself. Once you realize that you can make changes, it makes you want to be vocal.” ■

Fany Kulru Castro, Giulia Foscarel, Kim Kardashian, Chris Young, Giulia Minoi, Diane von Furstenberg, Tina Brown, Hanin Ahmed, Grace Burns, and Christy Turlington Burns.



WWD VENICE FILM FESTIVAL

Miu Miu Women's Tales Episode Centers on Black Female Representation

WWD sat down with French filmmaker Alice Diop, director of the 30th installment of the brand's film series, to discuss her episode "Fragments for Venus" premiering at Venice Film Festival. BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

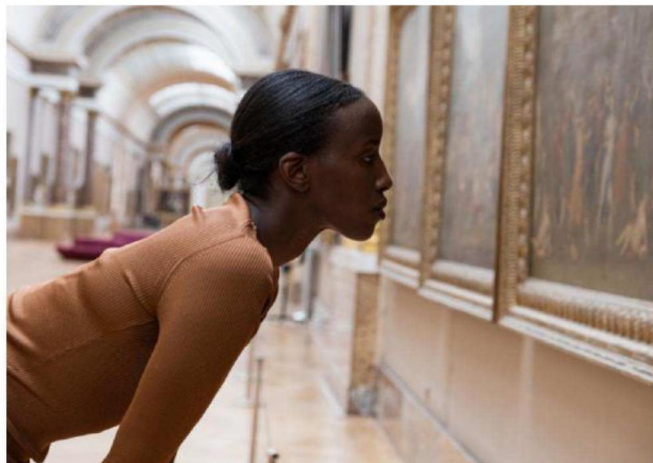
MILAN – A Black woman wanders through the halls of a museum, stopping to examine paintings while a voiceover cites titles and descriptions, revealing the place that Western art has often reserved to Black female bodies.

Another Black woman moves across the streets of Brooklyn, spending the day observing fellow Black women around her, her gaze moving from a crossing guard to a commuter in the subway, from a musician playing a flute to a lady painting on a bench – all living incarnations and modern interpretations of the new Venus.

These are the two main segments of "Fragments for Venus," the latest short movie in the Miu Miu Women's Tales series, which Miuccia Prada launched in 2011 as a commissioning platform exclusively for female filmmakers, who here were invited to express their own point of view and investigate the plurality of femininity with no subjects briefed beforehand so as to avoid restrictions.

Repairing a deformed representation of Black women is the focus of the 30th installment of the ongoing series, for which the brand tapped Alice Diop. The acclaimed French director has been behind documentaries examining marginalized communities, including "La Permanence" and "Vers la tendresse" in 2016, before her breakthrough feature "Saint Omer" inspired by a real-life infanticide trial of a Senegalese woman was presented in Venice in 2022, where it received accolades.

Now Diop is back to the Italian lagoon to unveil the 21-minute movie commissioned by Miu Miu, which will premiere at the Venice Film Festival's "Giornate degli Autori" on Saturday, before being released on the brand's digital channels and, like the other Tales, made available to stream



on Mubi globally from Sept. 15.

"This is the first time I have accepted a collaboration of this kind...because, for me, a commission is not enough of a motor to drive a project. I need something more intimate, more visceral," Diop told WWD in a Zoom interview on the eve of the premiere.

"But it's hard to say no to the offer to join such a prestigious team because most of the filmmakers who have participated in the [Miu Miu] Women's Tales are among those who are the most interesting to me and inspire me the most," she continued, citing the likes of Lucrecia Martel, Agnès Varda and Alice Rohrwacher and defining "all the women who participated in this series the most important of our contemporary era."

Miu Miu first reached out to Diop more than two years ago, after "Saint Omer"

played in Venice. The director found the time was now ripe to embark on the project as she has been spending a year teaching in the U.S. and been working on a free adaptation of the oeuvre of the American poet and artist Robin Coste Lewis.

Her Miu Miu episode was sparked by her interest in Coste Lewis' 2015 poem "Voyage of the Sable Venus," "which is basically revisiting or questioning the place that is given to Black women's body in the history of Western art. This is something that's always been central to my work and seemed particularly pertinent to me to be able to question these issues in the form of this film," she said.

"We – Black people – come from this history of painting in which we have been marginalized, objectified," said the director, whose film wants to show that "we – artists, writers, thinkers – are here now. It attests to the way in which we are now ready to express ourselves."

To this end, the film includes a tracking shot of contemporary art, paintings, sculptures and photography that is an "homage to all the contemporary female artists who inspire me the most and sharpen my days as a filmmaker." Tributes additionally include Meshell Ndegeocello's song "Thus Sayeth the Lord," which turns American poet Audre Lorde's ideas against injustice into a poignant canticle that closes the film.

"I've been making films from the margins, with a political intention of filming those margins, because those are the people I come from. That's my territory, my history," said Diop. "It's why I work. I've been working on these questions today, yesterday, always. This is my path...if it happens to coincide with the zeitgeist, that's great. But...it's been the same way the whole time and I suspect I'll be working on these questions still in 10 years."

Describing it as "my most simple and radical work to date," Diop sees the short movie as important as "Saint Omer." To be sure, there's a consistency in the two, not only in the themes but also in the cast, as Rwandan-Swiss contemporary artist and actress Kayije Kagame features in both.



"I always approach my films in the same way, which is to resolve specific questions that each film raises. And to me, there's no difference between a three-hour film or 20-minute film, between a fiction and a documentary," said Diop when asked if there were different challenges this time around.

Ditto for her time in Venice. "When you're presenting a film, what's important is not whether the film is a commission from a clothing brand or not...it's how the film will be received, how people are going to talk about it," said the director. "You're kind of on edge, there's something feverish about it because you don't know how the discourse is going to be shaped around the film. So in that way, there's been no change between the two experiences."

As for the reaction she hopes to elicit, Diop has no specific expectation. "Maybe for people to teach me things that I hadn't suspected I wanted to say, or for them to experience revelations that they hadn't imagined they might have," said Diop. "When I make a film, I'm looking to be nourished, expanded, made more lucid. And that's what I want for the people who see it, too...It's something that you can't predict... One could also expect silence – a reaction that is so deep that there is no speaking. That's very beautiful, as well."

"The film is a form of thought that is sent out to be received in every way. What's magnificent about making them is that what you've put into it, it is given back to you when people tell you what they've felt, seen and thought," said Diop. "I make my films for other people to speak."

Sparking a conversation is also what Miu Miu is all about. As per its Venice tradition, following the premiere and celebratory dinner at Palazzo Cà Corner della Regina – which houses Fondazione Prada's Venetian outpost – the brand will have Diop take part in a panel on Sunday. She will be in talks with fellow director Joanna Hogg, who worked on the previous installment of the Tales series, titled "Autobiografia di una Borsetta," or "Autobiography of a Handbag," and presented in London in February.

The event will be flanked by another talk between Miu Miu's longtime ambassador Emma Corrin and Maggie Gyllenhaal, who's part of Miu Miu Women's Tales Committee that includes talents from across the film industry, along with Prada. On Monday, it will be the turn of actresses Alisha Boe, Sarah Catherine Hook and Myha'la Herrold to take part in a conversation.

Next up, Miu Miu will return as official partner of Art Basel Paris' Public Program for the second year, bringing the "30 Blizzards" show by experimental British artist Helen Marten to the Palais d'Iéna from Oct. 22 to 26.

Here and above: A behind-the-scenes image of the 30th episode of Miu Miu Women's Tales, "Fragments for Venus" by Alice Diop.



Chanel Partners With Biennale College Cinema

The brand is supporting young filmmakers at the 2025 Venice Film Festival by partnering with the project, whose patron this year is Audrey Diwan. BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

MILAN – A regular presence at the Venice Film Festival, this year Chanel swapped its traditional soirée hosted at Harry’s Bar for a lunch celebrating its partnership with Biennale College Cinema.

This is the first time Chanel is endorsing the project, which festival organizers introduced in 2012 and which is dedicated to young filmmakers. In its role as a partner, Chanel provided financial support and connected the participants to industry professionals close to the company.

The initiative promotes new talents and offers them the opportunity to work with master filmmakers on new micro-budget feature films. Since its creation, 68 features by emerging filmmakers have been made, which were selected from more than 2,700 applications from all over the world.

Of the 12 projects chosen and supported by the institution for the 2024-25 edition, four have been completed and were presented as part of the official program of the Venice Film Festival.

The patron of the 13th edition is director and screenwriter Audrey Diwan, who’s been affiliated with Chanel for years. Diwan has a special bond with the film festival, too. In 2021, her movie

“Happening” starring Chanel ambassador Anamaria Vartolomei won the Golden Lion, the event’s award for best film.

“This patron role perfectly embodies how I feel about passing things on,” Diwan told WWD. “Cinema is, by nature, a collective art. When I started, someone reached out and offered me guidance. The day I received the Golden Lion, it was Jane Campion who presented it to me. And now it’s my turn to give back to others.”

The director described the project as “one of a kind” and underscored that the strength of the program “lies in its ability to bring a vision to life, to give it form.”

“Filmmakers from all over the world can submit their projects. Their radical ideas and unique perspectives are welcomed here as assets. Then, they are supported from the writing stage to production and, finally, the films are screened at the [festival], with packed theaters,” said Diwan, underscoring how the experience offers a springboard for young creators.

On Sunday, Diwan joined the director of the Venice Film Festival and Biennale College Cinema director Alberto Barbera in unveiling the 12 preselected projects for the next edition. They were flanked by the

four winning directors of this year’s chapter, who reflected on how the initiative shaped the development of their movies, which were shot across Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, Cambodia, the U.S. and India.

The four winning titles include Italian film “Agnus Dei” by Massimiliano Camaiti; “Becoming Human” by Polen Ly; “One Woman One Bra” by Vincho Nchogu, and “Secret of a Mountain Serpent” by Nidhi Saxena.

“Cinema – especially auteur cinema – is experiencing a difficult moment,” Diwan said. “These voices, which powerfully depict different realities and shed light on diverse cultures, deserve to be heard. If we lose the means to share these visions and bring this light into being, we risk entering a period of obscurantism.”

The mission of the initiative is in sync with Chanel’s roots.

For one, it was in Venice that Gabrielle Chanel met the young Italian director Luchino Visconti and, taking an instant liking to him, she helped launch his career by introducing him to Jean Renoir, who quickly became his mentor. Incidentally, Visconti was also among the cinematic



From left: Massimiliano Camaiti, Vincho Nchogu, Audrey Diwan, Alberto Barbera, Nidhi Saxena, Savina Neriotti, Polen Ly at Venice Film Festival.

references inspiring the cruise 2026 collection the brand paraded earlier this year at the iconic Villa d’Este overlooking Lake Como and for which it commissioned Sofia Coppola, a longtime friend of the house, to make a short film set in the exclusive hotel.

“Chanel has a very deep relationship with the world of cinema. Whether it’s through its connection to heritage, the restoration of films, or its commitment to the future with emerging voices, their desire is to support an artwork, a message, to help the artist cultivate their uniqueness,” Diwan concluded.

The Venice Scene Shines With New Openings

With the film festival in full swing, Venice has plenty of new spots to visit while enjoying the city. BY ANDREA ONATE

In Venice, the flow of tourists never stops – and with the Venice Film Festival in full swing until Saturday, there are even more people in town than usual, if that can be imagined.

Between screenings, parties, and lunches and dinners, there are several activities to squeeze in and one exhibition that shouldn’t be missed that focuses on the work of photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

Meanwhile, the Hotel Gabrielli has just reopened after a renovation, and its rooftop offers a stunning panorama of the iconic canals. For those looking to grab a bite, traditional cuisine with a few international influences can be enjoyed at the restaurant Da Lorenzo - Al Giardino Segreto by Paulo Airaudo.

Da Lorenzo - Al Giardino Segreto by Paulo Airaudo The new food destination in Venice “Da Lorenzo - Al Giardino Segreto by Paulo Airaudo” is located inside the NH Collection Venezia Grand Hotel Palazzo dei Dogi.

The restaurant is led by the six-Michelin starred Argentinian chef Paulo Airaudo and seats 18 guests.

His cuisine reinterprets traditional Venetian dishes through international influences, thanks to his experiences in Spain, Hong Kong and Switzerland. Guests are offered two tasting menus: one with seven courses, dubbed “Sensazioni” (feelings), and one with 11 courses, called “Emozioni” (emotions). In the first menu, customers can find spaghetti with mantis shrimp, salted lemon, sea grapes and

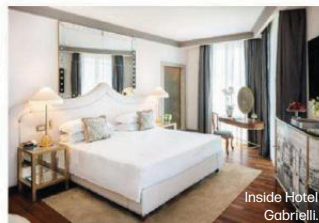
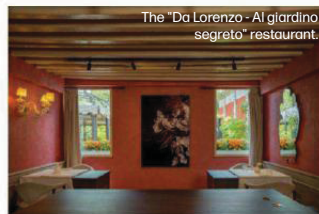
monkfish paired with bagna càuda and green asparagus. The second adds pigeon with onions and mushrooms, basil granita as a pre-dessert, and duck cappelletti with butter and thyme, among other dishes.

The restaurant draws its name from Lorenzo Patarol, a renowned collector and botanist who, in the 18th century, created the 21,600-square-foot garden that surrounds the restaurant. Patarol was also the creator of L’Erbario Patarol, the oldest botanical collection preserved at the Natural History Museum of Venice.

Hotel Gabrielli Starhotels just unveiled its renewed five-star Hotel Gabrielli, located on the prestigious Riva degli Schiavoni, just a few steps from St. Mark’s Square. Since 1856 the building has been owned by the Perkhof family, today in its fifth generation, and the hotel is now managed by Starhotels, as part of its prestigious Collezione brand.

The conservative renovation project of the historic 14th-century palazzo was entrusted to Milanese designer Andrea Auletta and his studio, preserving the heritage of the hotel and combining the property’s original architectural elements with contemporary items.

The hotel has 66 suites and there’s a terrace on the sixth floor that extends for more than 1,620 square feet, offering a mesmerizing view of the city. Guests can also spend time at the 6,480-square-foot garden restored through research into historical plant species, including two majestic centuries-old olive trees.



Patti Smith, 1986.

show, titled “Le forme del desiderio [The forms of desire],” will be held in Milan, while the third and final part, “Le forme della bellezza [The forms of beauty],” will take place at the Ara Pacis Museum in Rome. The current exhibition boasts a collection of 257 works created by Mapplethorpe, offering a comprehensive showcase of his work.

The exhibition opens with his first images and collages dating back to the end of the ‘60s, ranging from the portraits of the photographer’s longtime friend, life companion and muse Patti Smith to bodybuilder Lisa Lyon and Truman Capote, Richard Gere, Annie Leibovitz and Yoko Ono, among others.

In another section, male nudes celebrate the body with an ode to classic perfection, enhancing strength and symmetry through a refined use of light and composition. At the same time, the female nudes reflect an elegant and minimal aesthetic.

The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation has lent a selection of objects that belonged to the photographer, including two original Patti Smith audiocassettes, original exhibition invitations from galleries and museums, posters, magazines, handwritten letters and other rare items.

The common areas such as the Caffè Gabrielli restaurant and K lounge bar are adorned with mirrors, lagoon-green marble and woods. At the center of the dining room, there’s a central island adorned with a Murano glass chandelier and lush greenery serves as a focal point.

On the first floor guests can retreat to the private spa with a bathtub, a multisensory shower, a sauna, a hammam – and a treatment room for two.

“Robert Mapplethorpe. The Classical Forms” Exhibition Until Jan. 6, on the San Giorgio island, the “Stanze della fotografia di Venezia” center is presenting an exhibition dedicated to Mapplethorpe.

Curated by artistic director Denis Curtis, the exhibition is being promoted by Marsilio Arte e Fondazione Giorgio Cini in collaboration with the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation in New York.

The exhibition marks the inaugural chapter of a trilogy, with two additional events scheduled for 2026. The second

WWD VENICE FILM FESTIVAL

Venice Film Festival Red Carpet: More Predictable Than Outstanding

The incoming crop of luxury European creative directors utilized top celebrities at the Venice Film Festival to perhaps preview their upcoming debut collections. BY ALEX BADIA



Tilda Swinton
in Chanel.



Andrew
Garfield in Dior.



Alba
Rohrwacher
in Dior.



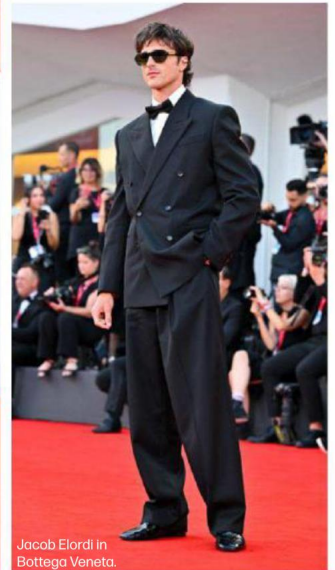
Ayo Edebiri
in Chanel.



Greta Lee
in Chanel.



Vicky
Krieps in
Bottega
Veneta.



Jacob Elordi in
Bottega Veneta.



Julia Roberts
in Versace.



Amanda
Seyfried in
Versace.

The Venice red carpet delivered glamour, but as a launchpad for new designers at established brands it felt predictable. Versace led with Dario Vitale's debut: Julia Roberts in a daytime blazer-and-jeans look that she wore to a morning press conference, later switching to a sleek, understated black gown – modern and polished – for an evening premiere, even it was very un-Versace. Amanda Seyfried wore the same daytime outfit days later leaning stylishly performative rather

than genuinely eco-conscious – perhaps no surprise since she and Roberts share the same stylist, Elizabeth Stewart.

Jonathan Anderson's new Dior highlights included Alba Rohrwacher in midnight-blue haute couture – old-world grandeur rewritten through Anderson's subversive eye, Monica Barbaro in a black gown with pleated skirt and bow, and Andrew Garfield in a cable-knit and Dior sneakers. Instagram went crazy with Garfield's everyday preppy look and endless comparisons to J.Crew pre-AI followed – an indication of the microscopic analysis of red carpet fashion these days since everyone on social media wants to be a critic. Although Anderson is undoubtedly saving his boldest new ideas for the runway show, this revealed some of the ingredients of the new mix.

Tilda Swinton can do no wrong. But this time around the Chanel pairing was the perfect combination of a crisp white silk blouse with ruffled cuffs tucked into a sweeping black mikado skirt. It's unclear whether this truly was a preview of Matthieu Blazy's new Chanel, however.

Louis Trotter's new Bottega Veneta was the festival's winner: Jacob Elordi in a boxy eveningwear tux and mega chic daytime all-white ensemble – doesn't hurt to look like an early 2000s Dolce & Gabbana model obviously, and Vicky Krieps in a sculptural black gown with leather accents and bold pink hair – one of the few looks that felt genuinely forward-thinking on the red carpet. When it came to jewelry there were some pieces here and there but a gobsnacking moment was definitely missing.



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WWD

GALATEO
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FASHION

Chloe Fineman Collaborates With Mother

Here and right: Chloe Fineman and her sister Emma Fineman have designed a capsule for Mother.



● Codesigned with her sister, Emma Fineman, the retro-inspired capsule takes cues from their favorite vintage finds and iconic on-screen stars.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Mother, the Los Angeles-based brand, has partnered with actress, comedian and “Saturday Night Live” star Chloe Fineman on a retro-inspired collection that was designed in partnership with her sister, artist Emma Fineman.

The Chloe x Mother capsule evokes the swinging spirit of the 1960s, taking cues from the sisters’ favorite vintage finds and the on-screen stars who defined the decade.

The 15-piece apparel and accessories collection, which goes on sale Thursday, gives a nod to European “It” girls and American style icons of the era. Among the looks are cigarette pants, A-line skirts and classic blue jeans. Bold shades of poppy and larkspur are featured in denim and recycled leather sets. Rounding out the capsule are a felt jockey hat and printed scarf.

The collaboration has cheeky style names such as The Wingman in Emotional Baggage and The Mayday in Fly Me Out.

“I’ve been a huge Mother fan since their jeans first came on the market,” said Chloe Fineman, in a Zoom interview along with her sister Emma. “I remember going to Nordstrom in L.A. and being like, ‘Oh my god, finally ‘70s-inspired jeans.’ My sister and I are huge fans of the ‘60s and ‘70s and I remember actually seeing a woman wearing the jeans and they just fit her body so perfectly. She looked so carefree. It was like the most aspirational jean moment. I bought like, four pairs and wore them to death, and I think I wore one of them to my ‘SNL [‘Saturday Night Live’] audition,” she said.

“My sister and I have had a dream forever to make a capsule collection together, and this sort of happened organically, and it was just the best meeting of things,” she said. Fineman said that she and her sister fought growing up, “but for some reason when we collaborate, we work beautifully together.”

Fineman said that she’s always wanted the perfect pair of vintage blue jeans, “and it’s been my full-time side hustle trying to find them.

“I couldn’t be more excited that I’ve achieved the best jeans I’ve ever worn with Mother. Full disclosure, my other full-time side hustle is borrowing my sister’s

clothing – so I’m thrilled we solved that problem with a curated collection inspired by our favorite vintage finds over the years – aka things I steal from her closet.”

Emma Fineman added that the two of them have been “obsessed with borrowing and stealing each other’s clothes our entire lives.”

“We like the idea of making our favorite clothes, making the things that we would have loved to steal from each other,” said Emma Fineman. She said they’ve always enjoyed going vintage shopping, and showing each other things. “I would find really magical and amazing vintage prices at the Alameda flea market or places like that. And then Chloe would want to take them, and then I would go out of my way to find that exact vintage piece from another place, but I just wanted the original.”

“But then Mother came along and said, ‘Guess what? You can go find your favorite vintage piece and we’ll work with you to recreate that.’ And that was how the collection was born,” said Chloe Fineman.

Chloe Fineman said the shirt was designed from a favorite piece of hers, and the jeans were based on a vintage jean she had found which is a “true ‘60s vintage blue.”

Discussing what type of jeans she likes, Chloe Fineman said, “One is like a Marilyn 501 Classic cuffed jean, which is so flattering. A lot of times when I go vintage denim shopping, there’s an extra thing of fabric in the front where it bunches. Getting to work with Mother who are denim experts and just have the most flattering jeans...We also did a cigarette jean, which had an evening carefree vibe, in a black and blue.”

Emma Fineman learned how to make clothing with patterns as a child. “Our grandma taught us how to make things with patterns. Emma paid attention, I absolutely did not,” said Chloe Fineman.

Emma Fineman came up with the custom graphics and a signature monogram. Her handiwork is tucked into jacket linings, stitched onto knits and splashed across sheer Step Up stockings.

Tim Kaeding, creative director and cofounder of Mother, said, “Chloe is a dream collaborator – witty, hilarious, wildly creative and an effortlessly perfect match from the start. She and Emma had a clear vision: vintage with a twist, equal parts style and storytelling. Every detail came from a place of personality, humor

and heart. We couldn’t have asked for a cooler, more creative duo.”

Lila Becker, president and cofounder of Mother Jeans, said they reached out to Chloe’s management and asked if she’d want to collaborate with them. “We were just fans and one of the lucky things is we’re Mother and have a brand so people will talk to us.” Becker said the process was “so smooth,” and Chloe has “such great ideas.”

Kaeding said Chloe and Emma came with “a whole color palette that was completely hers.”

While the Mother founders declined to give a sales projection, Becker said, “I think it’s going to be incredible. It’s super wearable, but fashionable, it’s very Chloe and Emma.”

“It’s very trendy as well,” Kaeding added. He said Chloe would come to the office with her dog, and they would have Emma, who is based in London, on Zoom. “They came in with their ideas. I came in with my ideas. They loved my ideas and I loved their ideas. Once we had the concept of the kind of ‘60s theme, it was pretty easy to put it all together,” Kaeding said.

There are four denim styles in the line, and one’s a skirt and one’s black.

Asked what type of jeans Chloe

liked, Kaeding said, “She wanted very kind of straight, boyish looks...We were going for Marilyn Monroe in the ‘50s and ‘60s, and she was kind of the original. We were inspired by that and we were also inspired by the French Riviera back in the ‘60s and everyone’s wearing capri pants,” Kaeding said.

The founders said they anticipate Chloe will wear some of the looks on “SNL.”

“The brand does pop up on the show. We’ve had Dakota Johnson [wear Mother] and we’ve had many ‘SNL’ hosts and cast members wearing Mother,” Becker said. “Not just the jeans, but tops and sweaters,” added Kaeding. Chloe Fineman’s name will be on the label.

Asked how Mother benefits from the experience, Kaeding said, “I think it does so much for the brand. It gives us different audiences. It also allows us to design different things that we don’t already have in the line – different fits, different washes and different fabrics.”

Turning to current business, Becker said it’s going very well. “In the last two months, business is way up,” Kaeding added.

Earlier in the year, Mother lost its first store, which was three days away from opening in the Palisades, in the L.A. fires. They plan to open another store or two in the U.S. More than 95 percent of Mother denim and 90-plus percent of the overall manufacturing is made locally in Los Angeles utilizing imported materials.

In the spirit of giving back, the Fineman sisters have selected the Los Angeles Fire Department Foundation as the charitable partner for the capsule, honoring their cousin who is a firefighter and supporting those impacted by the California wildfires. Ten percent of net sales from the collaboration will support the LAFD Foundation’s mission to provide equipment and fund programs that help Los Angeles firefighters.

Overall the capsule retails from \$35 to \$375. The denim bottoms, including jeans and a skirt, retail from \$238 to \$258. The denim jacket is \$375. Jean sizes go from 23 to 34.

The collection will be supported by a full social media rollout on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok, along with wall postings in Los Angeles and New York. Chloe and Emma will also do a talk show video called “The Chloe Show,” where she’s the host and Emma is an invited guest.



Some looks from the Chloe Fineman x Mother capsule.

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BUSINESS

Luxury Brands Need to Win Back Aspirational Shoppers, Before It's Too Late

An image from "Ralph's Hamptons" campaign.



Alexa Chung in Burberry's Festival campaign.



- According to Morgan Stanley, luxury brands "cannot play with the pricing lever anymore, and will need to recruit again from the middle to upper-middle class" if they want to grow.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – The season's most popular color? Without a doubt, it's white.

Groups including Burberry, Ralph Lauren and Tapestry and smaller European labels have been moving rapidly into the white space created by the big European luxury brands, whose aggressive price hikes in the post-pandemic years have alienated aspirational consumers in China, the U.S. and elsewhere.

Although the era of greedflation is slowly winding down and the big luxury houses are no longer increasing prices in the double digits, it will take time for them to win back the trust of aspirational customers who have already moved on, and opting for brands they believe offer better value for money.

A Consumer Backlash

Over the past three years, like-for-like price inflation – especially in soft luxury – has been "significantly ahead" of its long-term average, and well in the double digits, according to Bernstein. "Brands like Chanel have led this escalation, and most have followed," the bank said.

According to Morgan Stanley, the affordability of certain "iconic" luxury handbags in the U.S. has deteriorated between 10 percent and 33 percent over the past decade, far outstripping disposable income in the U.S., and "pricing out the middle-income consumer."

In raising their prices, Morgan Stanley added, "luxury brands have provided oxygen to more accessible alternatives. We think it is no coincidence that some more affordable brands, such as Toteme, Polène, or Coach are currently growing strongly."

HSBC believes that "Coach, Ralph Lauren, Longchamp and Burberry are seemingly benefiting greatly from the white space being created by premium luxury brands being out of reach for many aspirational consumers," HSBC added.

The bank argued that Europe's luxury giants "have undoubtedly lost in authenticity and appeal," due to a lack of creativity, greedflation and prices that are "difficult to justify."

There is also a rapidly growing white space in China. According to the business research firm Third Bridge, local Chinese brands "offer better value for money, and are creating increasingly fierce competition" for the luxury brands in a highly price-sensitive market.

A New Land of Opportunity

The white space is fertile ground for brands touting a value for money proposition.

In August, Ralph Lauren outstripped first-quarter expectations and raised its outlook for the full fiscal year, even with some fear over how consumers will react to the impact of higher U.S. tariffs on imports.

Net income rose 30.7 percent in the

quarter to \$220.4 million, while revenues for the three months ended June 28 increased 14 percent to \$1.7 billion, an 11 percent increase in constant currency.

Patrice Louvet, president and chief executive officer of Ralph Lauren Corp., said in an interview the company puts a lot of emphasis on value perception, which "isn't just about price. It's about how the storytelling, what's the product experience, what's the shopping experience."

He added: "We know the consumer is discerning, and we're putting a lot of emphasis on making sure that, relative to the competitive set, we provide a very attractive value. It is all about authenticity."

Tapestry has also been reaping rewards in the white space. The parent of Coach and Kate Spade beat fiscal third-quarter earnings and sales estimates and raised its outlook for the rest of its year, which ended in July.

In the fourth quarter, sales of the powerhouse Coach handbag brand shot up 14 percent to \$1.4 billion in the quarter, adding a dash of accessible luxury luster to the company.

In the first quarter of fiscal 2025-26, Burberry successfully stemmed the double-digit sales declines of the previous year and outstripped growth expectations.

Comparable store sales in the three months to June 30 were down 1 percent, compared with analysts' projections of a 3 percent decline. In the corresponding period last year, comparable store sales were down 21 percent.

"It's early days, and it's a tough macro, but we are really starting to see the potential of what lies ahead," said CEO Josh Schulman, who has been tweaking Burberry's pricing strategy and adopting a "good, better and best" offer in a bid to appeal to a variety of customers, not just the high-net-worth ones.

"We're taking things step by step, but we are optimistic about the quarters ahead, and optimistic about the business in general," Schulman added.

HSBC has high hopes, too. "Burberry used its outlet network swiftly to help move products from an overpriced, handbag-focused approach to go back to basics: well-priced, authentic, outerwear-focused," the bank wrote in a report called "Knight Fever," referring to the brand's historic logo.

Customers, too, are taking a renewed interest in the more democratic Burberry.

In July, after a year-long absence, Burberry made a comeback on the shopping platform Lyst's ranking of hottest brands. In the second quarter of 2025, Burberry landed in 17th place, ahead of Gucci, Birkenstock and Valentino.

Lyst said Burberry's return was the result of a resurgent "cool Britannia" vibe, a strong festival campaign and a growing demand for its menswear offering.

Big Luxury Is Feeling the Pain

By contrast, the big European brands are suffering and hoping that recent changes in management and creative direction, as well as less-aggressive price hikes will turn the tide in their favor.

According to Citi, luxury brands raised prices 3 to 6 percent in July to offset the impact of higher U.S. tariffs, and to smooth over price gaps in Europe. Industry sources say there will be more single-digit price hikes before the end of the year.

In the meantime, brands continue to feel the pain of consumer backlash against prices.

In the first half, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton saw net profit fall 22 percent as its key fashion and leather goods division missed expectations. The division, home to brands including Louis Vuitton, Dior and Celine, recorded a 9 percent drop in organic sales in the second quarter, below the Visible Alpha consensus forecast for a 7 percent decline. ▶

WHAT TO WATCH



Patrice Louvet

At Kering, parent of Gucci, Saint Laurent and Balenciaga, group net profit plummeted 46 percent in the first half. The group is hoping that incoming CEO Luca de Meo can stop the bleeding, particularly at Gucci, where Demna is set to take over as creative director.

At Prada Group, retail sales in the first half were down 1.9 percent to 1.65 billion euros, with performance in the second quarter impacted by lower tourist flows in Japan and Europe. Net profit in the six-month period was broadly flat at 386 million euros.

In 2024, the Chanel juggernaut came to a halt, as revenues fell for the first time since the pandemic and operating profits plummeted 30 percent amid a sharp slowdown in luxury spending in mainland China.

Revenues at the French fashion house totaled \$18.7 billion in 2024, down 4.3 percent at comparable rates, as growth in Japan and South Korea failed to offset the impact of macroeconomic and geopolitical volatility elsewhere.

The Value for Money Conversation

Even with changes to pricing, creativity and management, it might take a while for the big brands to win back aspirational customers.

According to a joint report by Bain & Co.



A Lady Dior bag.

and Altgamma, the Italian luxury goods industry association, engagement with brands across the demographics has slowed since 2022, with social media follower growth down 90 percent, and engagement rates off by 40 percent “largely due to price fatigue and stagnant creativity.”

Bernstein, meanwhile, believes that “value for money remains the main concern for luxury brands in the second half, with the luxury sector facing a paradigm crisis across multiple fronts.”

Yanmei Tang, analyst at Third Bridge, said even the most resilient luxury buyers “have their limits, and brands must offer more than just higher price tags to retain them. Price increases must be justified through innovation or improvements.”

Tang added that “value perception remains important, as many ultra-wealthy individuals are not willing to overpay simply for a brand name. While these

consumers continue to spend, they are becoming more selective, drawn to ‘quiet luxury’ and discreet, high-quality items recognized by their peers.”

Amrita Banta, managing director at Agility Research & Strategy, said that despite greedflation, high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals are still spending on luxury goods.

“However, they are more selective and shifting toward value-anchored luxury. It is a redefinition of what makes luxury worth paying for,” she said, adding that these shoppers scrutinize the value of their purchases.”

Banta added: “If a price increase is accompanied by enhanced quality, exclusivity or service, they may accept it. However, if it’s perceived as unjustified, it can result in brand erosion. High-net-worth consumers are typically brand-loyal, but not unconditionally.”

Johann Rupert, founder and chairman of Cartier parent Richemont, would agree. In contrast to its luxury peers, Richemont has been disciplined with pricing, and the strategy has delivered. The group’s jewelry brands posted their third consecutive quarter of double-digit growth in the three months to June 30.

Earlier this year, Rupert said he is loath to raise prices drastically – anywhere – for fear of damaging the relationship with the local customer.

“We were not greedy in the post-COVID-19 boom period. And I think our resilient results [in fiscal 2024-25] prove that we have not suffered



Gemma Chan for Cartier.



Sienna Miller in a Gucci hobo bag and red Miu Miu clogs.

the revenge of our clients. Our goal is to continuously keep the value relationship for our clients, and we will not make sudden, rapid increases,” he said.

A Long Road Ahead

The European luxury behemoths will have to reset their relationship with nearly all demographics and geographies if they want to start growing again.

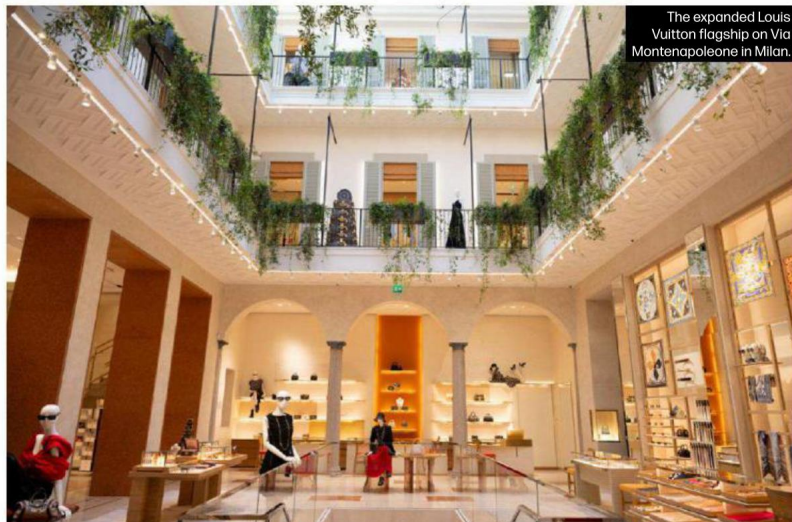
Gen Z will be a particular challenge. The Bain Altgamma report said luxury brands are now contending with “a growing disillusionment with their offerings among younger generations, notably Generation Z... who are reassessing their relationship with luxury.”

Morgan Stanley believes luxury brands are in a “difficult situation where they cannot play with the pricing lever anymore. For the sector to grow in line with its historical average, it will need to recruit again from the middle to upper-middle class. Relying only on high-net-worth individuals” cannot translate to a midsingle- to a high-single-digit growth rate, the bank argued.

The bank said growth will need to come from “significant price discipline over the next three years or so and/or playing with the product mix.”

Bernstein’s Luca Solca believes the big European brands have already made a decent start. “We are now in a different world with more moderate like-for-like [price] inflation, and a focused effort to introduce more aggressive entry price products.”

In the meantime, those smaller European brands, U.S. groups and Chinese fashion brands will continue to reap the white space rewards. ■



The expanded Louis Vuitton flagship on Via Montenapoleone in Milan.

BUSINESS

Where Luxury Might Thrive Next



A view of the IconSIAM mall in Bangkok.

- Analysts spy “meaningful” potential in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, with other geographies in embryonic stages.

BY MILES SOCHA AND RITU UPADHYAY

“I am naïve enough to think that China will come back in the not-too-distant future.”

So says, a little sheepishly, Erwan Rambourg, luxury analyst at HSBC and author of “Bling Dynasty,” the 2014 book that painted a bright picture of China as a key Eldorado for luxury goods.

To be sure, anemic demand in China and the U.S. has Europe’s big luxury groups fretting amid the biggest slowdown in 15 years, but in the meantime, there are emerging markets to consider.

“We’ve heard a lot about South Africa, Nigeria, Mexico, Indonesia and India,

which all likely have strong potential for growth but from a very small base,” Rambourg said.

By contrast, he cited two geographies that can “help the sector more meaningfully”: the Middle East, and certain other countries in Asia.

The former “continues to deliver on its promise, with local consumers, permanent residents and tourists alike contributing and, importantly, many new infrastructure projects that can help continue to boost awareness and appeal for the sector,” he said in an interview.

The latter refers to “emerging Chinese destinations, meaning mostly, but not only, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, where economic ties are leading countries to facilitate inbound travel from China with visa restrictions easing and luxury infrastructure also being added.”

Luca Solca, luxury analyst at Bernstein,

concurred that India “is still in embryonic phase,” and floated that “Iran could be interesting – if it ever opened up.”

In the meantime, he said the Middle East remains the most thriving emerging market “with the help of Russians who have transferred to Dubai.”

“Wherever you see consistent GDP growth ahead of the USA and a higher Gini factor (the degree of income inequality), that country becomes a net contributor of luxury goods consumers,” he explained.

Mohammed Abdulmagied Seddiqi, chief executive officer of luxury watch and jewelry retailer Ahmed Seddiqi, noted that exports of Swiss timepieces to the Middle East jumped 53 percent in 2024 against a global decline of more than 2 percent, citing data from the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry.

“This is certainly apparent when we speak to clients, their passion and curiosity for luxury continues to soar,” he said.

“Our focus has always been on nurturing lasting relationships with our brands and customers that stand the test of time. The establishment of events such as Dubai Watch Week and the importance of Dubai and UAE as a key hub in the region, further unites the community and provides a space for collectors and collecting clubs to engage with brands further.”

In the main luxury markets, Bernstein’s Solca forecasts a U-shaped recovery leading most likely to low-single-digit growth, “as some of the major uncertainties are reducing.”

HSBC’s Rambourg agreed that wealth creation is key for luxury goods development, but it varies from region to region.

“In the U.S., wealth is mostly tied up to equity markets. In China, it is property. In emerging markets, it will vary,” he explained. “Beyond wealth of course, it is the capacity to project a brighter future that really plays out in terms of luxury demand. You may be rich but if you trust that your economic outlook is about to deteriorate, you will be postponing purchases.”

Ultra-high net worth individuals “aren’t too worried about recessionary risks or inflationary pressures. Conversely, aspirational consumers aren’t too keen to spend 5,000 euros on a handbag these days,” he continued. “Therefore, you get an hourglass shape of consumption right now with very high-end brands still doing well and Polène, Longchamp, Coach at the other end of the spectrum being hot.”

Rambourg noted that “this polarization exists within the mega brands themselves, hence the recent success of the Giglio bag at Gucci, for instance, given it’s a much better value proposition than the rest there.”

HSBC is expecting the full-year 2025 to be “flattish” for the sector. That forecast “implies an improvement to low-single-digit positive in the second half after low-single-digit negative in the first half. The bulk of that is to come from China improving,” Rambourg noted.

BUSINESS

HSBC: Luxury Sector Should Turn a Corner in H2

- Equity analyst Erwan Rambourg said “it’s time to be a bit more positive” as he expects second-half sales to pick up slightly and decent, profitable growth to resume in 2026.

BY MILES SOCHA

HSBC thinks “its time to be a bit more positive on the luxury sector” after a year of pain, much of it self-inflicted.

So said a new report issued Tuesday by luxury analyst Erwan Rambourg, who expects sales in the second half of 2025 to pick up slightly “and 2026 to revert to decent, profitable growth.”

The bank is forecasting sales to be up 2.9 percent on average in the second half as soft luxury brands start to find solutions after suffering “from greedflation and a lack of creativity,” according to the report, no doubt alluding to the designer changes currently under way at Gucci, Dior, Chanel, Balenciaga and a host of other European brands.

Louis Vuitton’s introduction of lipsticks and makeup got a shout-out as

“re-awakened creativity at more palatable price points.”

“We believe the Chinese cluster should start to turn the corner in terms of luxury demand,” Rambourg wrote in the report. “And although we acknowledge that there are short-term hurdles for the American cluster (inflationary pressures, a tough basis of comparison as we lap last year’s post-election bump), we do not foresee a dire scenario there.”

HSBC also upgraded LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and Kering to buy from hold, and downgraded Hermès International to hold from buy.

While Rambourg has doubts that Louis Vuitton can grow at or above mid-single digits in the long term, “we believe in Dior’s rebound, think cost containment will go some way toward defending the margin, and also see many opportunities for the LVMH group to simplify its structure.”

Jonathan Anderson, Dior’s new creative director, has already unveiled his first men’s collection to strong acclaim, and is dressing celebrities in haute couture at the Venice Film Festival to mixed reactions.

As for Kering, its new chief executive

officer Luca de Meo, who officially arrives on Sept. 15 after a lifelong career in the automobile industry, will be Teflon-coated for criticism in the first three to four quarters of his tenure, “and we think the

likely changes introduced will lower the risk” on shares.

HSBC said Hermès remains “a much better business than the rest of our coverage,” however the bank does not see sales accelerating much in the second half. (Revenues in the first half rose 8 percent.)

Rambourg noted his forecast of “sequential improvement” is also supported by “a less punishing basis of comparison in Japan,” a favorable basis of comparison in Europe after the Paris Olympic Games in 2024 boosted spending and a recovery in U.S. equity markets after the panic selloff in early April.



Louis Vuitton lipsticks.

WHAT TO WATCH

WWD

BUSINESS

Cyber Risk Management a Top Priority

- An expert at cybersecurity provider Huntress said retailers need to be practical with risk evaluation and have a plan in place to contain the risk.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG

LONDON — Retail-related cybersecurity attacks have become a growing problem in 2025.

In the first half alone, a slew of high-profile brands and retailers — from M&S, Co-op, Adidas and The North Face to Harrods, Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Dior — have fallen victim to cyber attacks, with customers' data stolen and system outages disrupting daily operations.

Julius Cerniauskas, chief executive officer of proxy solutions and web scraping tools provider Oxylabs, said cybercriminals are attracted to luxury brands and high-street names because they hold large amounts of valuable customer data.

"Attackers are becoming more opportunistic and sophisticated, targeting brands that hold valuable customer data, not just credit card numbers. Whether it's luxury retail or everyday consumer brands, hackers are finding weak spots and exploiting them fast," Cerniauskas added.

Marijus Briedis, chief technology officer at NordVPN, further explained that the exposure of customer profiles, preferences and contact information may seem non-financial, but in the wrong hands it becomes a blueprint for exploitation.

"It's a mistake to assume that only financial information matters in a breach. In reality, knowing what someone buys, where they live, and how they shop is just as dangerous," said Briedis, adding that a luxury brand's customer data is a gold mine for psychological targeting by



Pedestrians near a Louis Vuitton store in Hong Kong.

cybercriminals.

"Armed with purchase history and detailed personal info, attackers can create phishing emails that look like they came straight from Dior's marketing department. That level of realism makes scams nearly indistinguishable from the real thing," Briedis continued.

For example, Dior's Instagram account was hacked in February. Hackers posted a story promoting a fake cryptocurrency called "Dior Official Coin," which included an external link for token access. While many followers recognized the scam early on, some were deceived and suffered financial loss.

In a recent interview with WWD, Franck Le Moal, group IT and technology director at LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, said the luxury conglomerate was battling a sharp increase in cybercrime, and in response, it is bolstering investment in cybersecurity in

partnership with Google Cloud.

"But it's a game of cops and robbers, and it's an ongoing battle," he said. "Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, all you need is the occasional tiny flaw in the system to benefit this increasingly large-scale cybercrime industry. This is a challenge for all businesses, including luxury."

A report from KnowBe4 in March added that there is a 56 percent spike in retail cyberattacks driven by phishing and AI.

"This puts retail in the top five industries targeted by cybercriminals," the report said. It noted that the average cost of a single retail data breach "reached \$3.48 million in 2024," representing an 18 percent increase from 2023.

According to Michael Tigges, senior security operations analyst at cybersecurity provider Huntress, while there is never an assurance that an organization can be compromise-free,

there are immediate steps a company can take to shore up defenses and implement immediate, high-impact changes to security that make compromise significantly less likely.

He suggested that retailers should first have an inventory check about what data they have, where it exists and what it does in the digital space. Then they can look into organizational legal obligations, such as payment data handling and processing, and personally identifiable information handling.

Tigges added that retailers need to be practical with this risk evaluation and have a plan in place to contain the risk.

It includes drafting incident response procedures, ensuring managed detection and response services work within this incident response plan, and exercising it regularly with tabletops and real-world scenarios.

"At some point, something of security significance will happen to every organization. The difference between a security event and a security incident is often early detection and response," said Tigges, adding that many third-party solutions can help with strengthening cybersecurity by encrypting data at rest and tokenizing payment information.

Data breaches have been around for years. The largest were the Yahoo data breaches in 2013 and 2014, involving more than 3 billion user accounts. In 2013, mass retailer Target Corp. suffered a breach that compromised 40 million credit and debit card records — and 70 million customer records — when hackers gained access to the point-of-sale systems of one of its vendors during the holiday season.

A cyberattack in 2023 involving personally identifiable information of customers impacted 35 million customers of apparel giant VF Corp. That same year, 10 million JD Sports customers had their information stolen, which included the last four digits of their credit cards that were used for payment.

BUSINESS

Brands Bet on London Despite Tough Retail Climate

- Key areas, including Regent, Oxford, Bond and Sloane Streets and King's Road, continue to attract leading brands.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG

LONDON — The absence of tax-free shopping cost the West End 310 million pounds in retail sales in the first six months of the year, marking the biggest half-year loss since the policy was removed in 2021, according to new research from the New West End Company, which represents some 600 retail, restaurant, hotel and property owners in central London's core shopping areas anchored by Bond, Oxford and Regent Streets.

That said, leading brands are still fighting for prime locations across London despite a generally tough business environment.

As first reported by WWD, Phoebe Philo is planting her flag in London's Mayfair with plans to open her first store on Carlos Place, in a former office building. The store will be across the street from The Row, and a few steps from The Connaught hotel.

In the West End, Kim Kardashian's shapewear and apparel brand Skims is set to open a 12,000-square-foot store next summer at 245-247 Regent Street, previously occupied by Ted Baker.

Following a double-decker bus summer pop-up with Wilson across London, Ronnie Fieg's fashion and lifestyle brand Kith has also signed a lease to open its first stand-alone U.K. location on Regent Street, according to Savills. The brand entered the market with Selfridges in 2019.

Oxford Street continues to draw mainstream fashion players this fall as well. Mango, Puma, New Balance, Pandora, Massimo Dutti and Oysho are among a growing list of retailers renewing their retail experience on the street with bigger stores.

Fast-fashion retailer Shein is set to open its second pop-up between Sept. 26 and 28 on the street at Future Stores, an event venue right next to the Elizabeth Line's Tottenham Court Road west exit.

At the pop-up, shoppers will be able to jump on new-season offerings from Shein-owned brands such as Musera, Anewsta, Elenzga and Vuva Rella, as well as accessories from Missguided and MOTF.

U.S. upscale furniture retailer RH, meanwhile, has taken over the three Grade II-listed buildings, one of which used to house Abercrombie & Fitch, on Burlington Gardens right behind the Royal Academy of Arts for its first London location.

A short walk away, Saint Laurent next spring is set to move from 22-33 Old Bond Street to a new location on 11-14 Grafton



Phoebe Philo

Kim Kardashian

Ronnie Fieg

Street, a 60 million pound redevelopment right between Givenchy and Dior's flagships.

Later in the year, the Stockholm-based minimalist label Toteme is opening its second store in the U.K. at 159 Sloane Street, which neighbors Brunello Cucinelli, Oliver Peoples and Diptyque.

Australian label Zimmermann is set to open next spring on the same street, which completed a grand-scale, 46 million pound refurbishment earlier this year.

Dutch menswear brand Mr Mavis and British contemporary brand Needle & Thread are set to open on the nearby King's Road, joining a lineup of fashion players including Maku, Cefinn, Jonak, Soeur, Ysé and Birkenstock.

According to Savills, occupational demand remains buoyant for prime opportunities in central London, as year-on-year footfall for each month of the

second quarter of 2025 was positive in London's West End.

First store openings by new international entrants to London totaled 21 in the first half of 2025, representing a 10.5 percent increase year-on-year, and year-end numbers are on course to exceed 2024 levels. Central London retail investment in the period amounted to 1.6 billion pounds, which is already ahead of full-year 2019 levels.

Looking at the second half of 2025, the property services firm said domestic spend in the West End is likely to be more exposed to inflationary pressures, in response to the new tariff environment, while international spending is likely to be more resilient, supported by improving consumer confidence in the eurozone and a continued uptick in international arrivals.

BUSINESS

Industry Sanguine on Holiday Sales

● U.S. retailers are looking for consumers to stay resilient and expect low-single-digit sales gains and minimal impact on prices from tariffs this holiday season.

BY DAVID MOIN

Retailers are feeling pretty good about the holiday 2025 season, even though shoppers are likely to shorten their gift lists as they fret over tariffs, the economy and geopolitical turmoil.

Retailers, partially lifted by inflation, expect on average low-single-digit sales gains for the holiday season, slightly under last year's 4.2 percent sales growth. Here's why: Number one, Americans' spending behaviors belie how they feel about the world and their personal finances. Consumers continue to show shopping resilience while purchasing selectively and cautiously for deals. The back-to-school season has been good and widely seen as a barometer for the holiday period. Tariffs shouldn't jack up merchandise prices too much, at least not for the rest of this year, as major retailers absorb much of the higher costs of importing.

In addition, retailers are focusing more on value, price, private labels and investments in AI and digital tools to enhance service and personalization. Furthermore, the stock market is holding up, interest rates are seen coming down, and the end of the de minimis exemption for goods valued under \$800 — which allowed retailers, including Chinese mass merchants, to sell their wares directly to U.S. consumers without incurring extra costs — should make U.S. retailers more competitive.

More significantly, retailers have been extending their holiday marketing, many launching campaigns around Halloween, some even promoting "Christmas in July," after importing holiday goods earlier this year. Macy's ran a "Black Friday in July" sales event for five days starting July 23. It also marketed a "Christmas in July" sale on July 25 for the first time, offering holiday

and general merchandise, according to a news release. For some consumers, "Christmas in July" is not just about saving money, it's also about saving time and avoiding the holiday rush for popular items.

Like last year, there are 27 days between Thanksgiving and Christmas in 2025.

Sources told WWD they expect mass merchants, discounters, off-pricers, warehouse clubs, electronics stores and selected apparel specialty retailers to do well during holiday 2025.

Walmart has an upbeat outlook on the season, based on steady back-to-school shopping. The company raised its forecast for sales gains this year to 3.75 percent to 4.75 percent, up from the previous forecast of gains ranging from 3 percent to 4 percent.

"Back-to-school is usually something of an indicator of how the holidays will go, and we feel good about how it went for us in terms of units and dollars sold and inventory sell through at both Walmart and Sam's Club," Doug McMillon, president and chief executive officer, said during a second-quarter conference call with investors and industry analysts. "Our top back-to-school items had a lower price than last year, and we offered a basket of everything students need for their first day of school for under \$65.

"We had our Walmart U.S. store managers together last week for our holiday planning meeting, where they got to see many of our new items, and pricing for the upcoming season. We liked what we saw and heard, and we like our position for the back half of the year. We're expecting to have a good holiday season at Walmart," he added.

"It should be a good, solid holiday season," said Stephen D. Lebovitz, president and CEO of CBL Properties. His outlook, he said, is "definitely more positive now than if you would have asked me the same question in April or May."

He said U.S. President Donald Trump's recent pause on China tariffs for 90 days, and locking in some trade deals in Europe "gives the retailers more clarity on what they are paying for goods, more confidence in ordering inventory and being stocked correctly for the holidays. Also,

the economy has continued to perform well. The stock market is up. Consumer confidence has hit some low points, but the degree to which we see consumers shopping would suggest otherwise."

Asked when he thinks retailers will kick off their holiday campaigning, Lebovitz said, "I don't think it can start any earlier than it has in recent past seasons. Once we finish Halloween, holiday starts ramping up. It's hard to imagine it accelerating anymore."

The National Retail Federation predicts holiday sales gains of between 2.5 percent and 3.5 percent over the 2024 holiday season; Deloitte forecasts 3.1 percent growth.

Somewhat less optimistic is Marshall Cohen, chief retail adviser at Circana, who sees retailers posting flat to 2.5 percent growth for holiday 2025. He said that's based on current trends; consumer behavior from last year; how the calendar falls; the propensity for travel and other expenses cutting into retail spending, and some elevated prices.

"Retailers will absolutely push for an early start [to the holiday season] and consumers will respond because they are thinking about price increases and supplies running out. You will see an early start from a promotional standpoint. Then there will be a post-Black Friday lull and a surge in shopping in the last week, but that lull after Black Friday is getting deeper," he said.

Asked if the back-to-school season is a barometer for how the holiday season plays out, Cohen said, "It is sometimes an indication of good things, it tells you the willingness of the consumer to engage, look for a deal, buy higher price or new product, and where and how the consumer is shopping. Back-to-school is definitely a strong indicator of things to come but not necessarily foolproof."

"We have always felt that the back-to-school season is a good but imperfect predictor of subsequent holiday sales," said Craig Johnson, president of Customer Growth Partners, the consulting and research firm. He said he's "cautiously optimistic" about the holiday season, partly because shoppers have shown resourcefulness and resilience ever since

the COVID-19 bounceback by retailers in late 2020.

"There are four key macro ingredients to a successful holiday landscape," Johnson explained. "There has to be solid disposable personal income growth, which year-to-date is up 4.5 percent which is solid and consistent with overall holiday sales of between 4 and 6 percent, in nominal numbers." Factoring in inflation, 4.5 percent comes out to 1.6 percent to 1.7 percent real sales growth, he added.

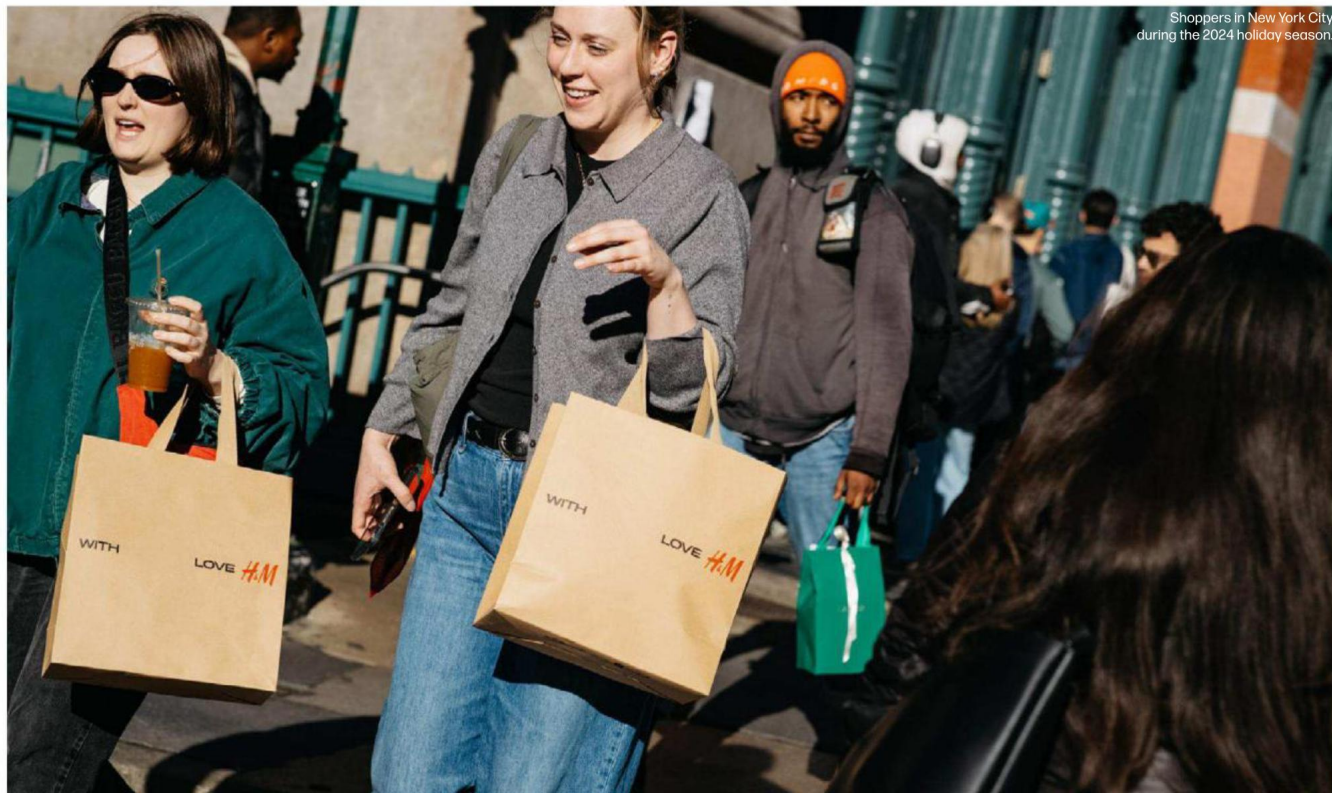
"The second macro factor is that consumers have money in hand to spend — the dry powder. We believe the personal savings rate is a nice solid 4.7 percent and that compares to last year's 3.8 percent.

"The third factor is you have to have newness, in both format and fashion. We are seeing a lot of new openings by stronger players," Johnson said, also pointing to the teen market with such players as Abercrombie & Fitch partnering with the NFL. "Retailers doing joint marketing do bring some newness," he said.

"The fourth macro factor is there has to be a catalyst that can trigger growth. We think the rebound in the housing market, which just bottomed out, will gain momentum while interest rates slide down further. Once the interest rate hits 5 percent, housing will take off," spurring sales of home improvement merchandise, consumer electronics and major appliances, he said.

On the fashion side, Johnson expects athleisure and footwear to shine this holiday season, including such brands as Free People, Alo and Vuori, which deliver newness.

"Strong and consistent transaction growth, not footfall necessarily, is the hallmark of all superior retailers. Look for them to be the winners this holiday season. So it's Home Depot, Lowe's, Costco, TJX Cos., Walmart. They all know how to drive growth, and the bigger you are, the more likely you are able to motor through whatever tariff tides come your way. They will work out deals to protect their customers. A lot of them will take cost pressures off the consumer and move it up the value chain," Johnson said.



Shoppers in New York City during the 2024 holiday season.

BUSINESS

How Saks Global Reshapes Its Luxury Operations

- Vendors want greater clarity on the “reset” plan for Saks Fifth Avenue and the Neiman Marcus Group, and stronger assurances they’ll get paid for shipping goods to the stores.

BY DAVID MOIN

In its self-proclaimed “luxury reset,” Saks Global has cleared some hurdles but significant challenges remain.

After purchasing the Neiman Marcus Group for \$2.7 billion in December, Saks Global in June made a crucial \$120 million interest payment on bonds financing the deal; in July began to catch up on some long overdue bill payments to vendors, and in August completed a debt restructuring, leading to a \$600 million financing package.

To cut costs and enhance efficiencies, management has been consolidated and centralized so one team oversees the merchandising and marketing of both Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue; hundreds of workers have been laid off this year alone, and a new chief financial officer, Brandy Richardson, formerly at Neiman Marcus and Tailored Brands, was hired. Saks Global anticipates cutting \$600 million in annual costs over the next few years.

In other initiatives, Saks Fifth Avenue opened a luxury shop on Amazon, with a handful of major brands and a few dozen smaller ones, and the company is getting deeper into AI and service, launching a personalized homepage on the website, and a virtual voice assistant, “Sophie,” who can answer questions from customers about orders, returns, gift cards and other subjects.

Saks Global appears to have turned a corner for now, at least financially, with the wherewithal to get through 2025. Richard Baker, the group’s executive chairman, also is said to have deep pockets. Baker’s investment firm, NRDC Equity Partners, along with BB Kapital SA, last year acquired Galeria Karstadt Kaufhof, the department store in Germany, and, according to Standard & Poor’s, Saks Global’s real estate portfolio is worth \$4.4 billion, suggesting there are potential assets that could be monetized if further financing is needed. Also, Amazon, Authentic Brands Group and Salesforce are among the companies that have invested in the NMG purchase.

But all that has left many small and medium-sized vendors dumbfounded as to why Saks has not kept its promise to pay its bills, while larger vendors and luxury conglomerates – LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Richemont and Kering – have been getting paid.

“The Saks situation is better, but they’re still not current,” claimed one vendor in late August. “They have sent out some of those monthly installments as promised. But we may be doing better than others. People want to ship without worrying about it. We need more comfort and assurances that there’s a plan they’ll stick to. Just pay the bills. Do what you are supposed to.”

Aside from the money owed them, vendors want clarity on how Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus will evolve – how they will differentiate their



The Saks Fifth Avenue flagship in Manhattan.

merchandising and messaging. Saks Global is comprised of the Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman and Saks Off 5th stores and e-commerce operations.

“Since the deal for Saks to buy Neiman’s was finalized, there’s been an expectation that a strategic vision detailing what Neiman’s represents and what Saks represents gets articulated. As far as I can tell, that hasn’t happened yet,” said one financial source close to the situation. “There hasn’t been any intentionality about what Neiman’s is going to look like, and what Saks is going to look like. So now you just have two parts of the same body essentially competing, really head-to-head in about a dozen markets, and not coming to market with any clear strategy.”

It could come down as follows: Saks and Neiman’s continue to carry many of the same brands – one ex-Saks executive said there’s about 65 percent overlap – but Neiman’s doubles up on “super luxury,” meaning the higher and most luxurious items in the designer collections. Saks, which has several stores in secondary markets, could tackle “opening price point luxury” and seize a tier of fashion above what Nordstrom and Bloomingdale’s carry, but below Neiman’s.

“Any significant reset costs money and takes time,” the financial executive said. “You have to cycle out the product that you’ve had and bring in new product. You have to educate the consumer with advertising and influencers and events. All this stuff costs money.”

Still, through its acquisition of NMG, Saks Global gains significantly more buying power that could sharpen the merchandising of its retail divisions. Scale is important in the market, providing greater leverage over brands, but Saks

Global went into the NMG deal assuming more debt, behind on payments to vendors and dealing with softness in the luxury sector in general.

There have been reports that fall goods have been slow to get into the stores. Saks is prepping for goods, lacking credit. Competitors, notably Bloomingdale’s and Nordstrom, are taking advantage of Saks’ vulnerability by advancing their presentations of designer and contemporary brands. Saks has been reducing its vendor matrix by the hundreds, some being forced out, others voluntarily leaving because they’re owed money or limiting their exposure by shipping fewer doors.

Watch for store closures. Marc Metrick, chief executive officer of Saks Global, has said he sees just under 10 locations going dark. Saks in Palm Beach, Fla., recently closed, and some other closings could happen where Saks and Neiman’s have stores in the same centers. The historic Neiman Marcus flagship in downtown Dallas nearly closed for good last March, but an 11th-hour arrangement was reached between Dallas city officials and Saks Global to keep the store open at least through the end of this year. A plan for further extending the life of the store could be formulated by possibly downsizing it and redeveloping the site with additional uses. Neiman Marcus has 36 stores; Saks Fifth Avenue operates 38, and Bergdorf Goodman operates a men’s store and a women’s store, which the company lists as one location.

Saks executives have said Saks has the wherewithal and is generating enough cash to support operational needs and its debt load, though uncertainty in the market persists. But as one fashion

executive said, “I am optimistic. I’ve seen so many companies on their heels find a way to get an injection and then gain some momentum in the business. Saks did lose that aspirational customer in this uncertain economy, but they still have a luxury base to hold them up.”

The rebounding stock market supports that. “As long as Saks doesn’t discount their way to sales, they will be fine. They’ll have enough liquidity to meet the next quarter for holiday, right when they’re flush with cash, and they did close this new refinancing. For me, what we need to watch is really what happens after the year ends. What happens in the first quarter? Will they be making those vendor payments?” the executive said.

“It’s about product, promotion and people,” Tom Ott, the former Saks Fifth Avenue senior merchant turned off-price consultant, said in a recent WWD article. “If those elements are recreated, rather than being sidetracked by all the conversations about money, the customer will come in. It doesn’t have to take years and years. It could be 18 months. I was at Saks for 24 years. It’s a lot about rallying around initiatives and getting the people in the stores and the merchants focused and delivering something that’s differentiated and special. The brands would rally around that and help drive sales.

“Leadership is so preoccupied on just trying to stay alive. They need to poke their heads out from under the sand and look at driving business. Gen Z is really interested in brick-and-mortar shopping in particular. You don’t have the luxury as a retailer to think just about e-comm. You also need to be proficient at the stores. Many have forgotten about the art of brick-and-mortar.”

BUSINESS

A Kohl's Corp. Comeback In the Making?



● The retailer is at the crossroads of rebounding or collapsing, but despite management changes, investor pressures and economic headwinds, signs that turnaround initiatives are kicking in have been evident this year.

BY DAVID MOIN

Kohl's Corp. is picking its spots.

Private brands, petites, fashion and fine jewelry, opening price points and coupons are central to the value-oriented, family chain's turnaround strategy – and there are signs the initiatives are starting to bear fruit.

For its second quarter, Kohl's reported margin gains, expense reductions and merchandise improvements, and lifted its profit forecast for 2025. There were sales declines, though not as bad as expected. Net income at the Menomonee Falls, Wisc.-based family-oriented value chain rose to \$153 million in the quarter ended Aug. 2, from \$66 million in the year-ago quarter. Adjusted net income last quarter slipped to \$64 million, or \$0.56 per diluted share, from \$66 million, or \$0.59 per diluted share, in the year-ago period.

Whether the improved results were a flash in the pan or are sustainable remains to be seen. But two things are clear – Kohl's is getting better at inventory management and there's plenty more that needs to be done to lift the business out of its hole. Some possibilities to watch for:

- Investments in stores to create an exciting, modern atmosphere that's

fun to shop, with greater localization of product, greater food offerings or coffee stops, flashier graphics and stronger community ties. As one accessory designer told WWD, "It feels like I'm walking into something stuck in the '80s."

- Continuing store closures, on top of the 27 revealed this year.
- Enhanced services taking advantage of Kohl's stores being strategically situated closer to people's homes than big malls, often in drive-up strip centers. Eighty percent of Americans live within 15 miles of a Kohl's.
- A new roster of celebrity tie-ins through its Sephora partnership and private brands. Sephora is a growing business at Kohl's and is expected to account for \$2 billion in sales, though that means there's been significant declines in traffic and revenues in other areas of the store considering total sales have been down.

Kohl's needs a compelling marketing strategy to get more dollars from existing customers and telegraph what it stands for, and what makes it distinctive. In other words, the store must project a sharper brand identity, and double down on catering to low- and middle-income customers. It's widely considered "mom's store," lacking sufficient youth appeal. It's been tough for Kohl's to find the right balance of the two. Yet Kohl's needs to figure out how to broaden its appeal and generate greater traffic in its stores and online, without alienating its core customers.

The company has been "stuck in the middle" along with businesses like Macy's

and JCPenney, which appeal largely to middle-income and working-class families but have been squeezed by consumers trading down to off-pricers, dollar stores and outlets, or trading up to higher-priced specialty stores. Sales at Kohl's hovered in the \$18 billion to \$20 billion range until plunging to \$16 billion in 2020 due to the pandemic. Business rebounded the next year, but has been down since 2023. The stock price was as high as \$55.67 in 2018, and as of Aug. 29 was at \$15.06.

It does seem that executives have determined, at least to some degree, a roadmap to return to growth, after many seasons of national brand and private brand changes and trials and errors. Kohl's has been overly dependent on big brands that are widely distributed at retail, yet there have been lessons learned. Some fresh and refreshed private labels in fashion and home like Sonoma, Lauren Conrad, Simply Vera Vera Wang and Flex are being offered. Sephora at Kohl's has been a success, and the company maintains an attractive value proposition that could stand out further. The "Kohl's Cash" program has been popular, typically offering \$5 or \$10 coupons on \$50 purchases. The concept has been copied by other retailers.

In the '80s, '90s and in the early years of the new millennium, Kohl's was among the fastest-growing retailers in the U.S. But most recently it has been hit from several sides, most notably stiffening competition primarily from Amazon, off-pricers and membership clubs as well as Walmart and Target. There's also been a revolving door of chief executive officers, activist pressures and macroeconomic headwinds.

Michael Bender has been serving as

interim CEO since May. He stepped down from his role as chairman but continues on the board of directors. Earlier in his career he served as president and CEO of Eyemart Express, president at the optical retailer, and held executive positions at Walmart, including chief operating officer of global e-commerce. Earlier he held senior positions at Cardinal Health Inc., Victoria's Secret for L Brands and PepsiCo.

Much of Bender's agenda for Kohl's stems from the playbook of the former CEO, Ashley Buchanan, who was fired for engaging in vendor deals posing conflicts of interest. During his abbreviated tenure, Bender advocated for bolstering proprietary brands, restoring discontinued categories and deals on coupons within the private brand program, and putting more attention on fine jewelry, home decor, petites, impulse items and continuing to prioritize the Sephora beauty areas. Bender has sustained those initiatives. While a search is underway for a new CEO, there may not be much of a rush to find one if Kohl's continues to show improved performances this year.

"During the second quarter, we started seeing progress in our women's business as we invested back into proprietary brands, streamlined the choices in intimates and reintroduced the petites category," Bender said during his second-quarter conference call with investors and industry analysts. "Now, while it's clear that these efforts are beginning to resonate with our customers, we also recognize that this performance is not yet where we aim to be. Our entire team remains focused on enhancing the way we serve customers and over time returning the company to growth.

"Specifically, our lower- to middle-income customers remain the most challenged, while our higher income customers have proven to be more resilient," Bender said. "These lower- to middle-income customers continue to prioritize value and are trading down into lower opening price point products. Several of our key initiatives are focused on delivering greater value to these customers through investing in our proprietary brands and adding more coupon-eligible brands. Our outlook for the balance of the year assumes the macroeconomic environment will remain challenged. However, our strong operating discipline and improved cash flow generation will continue to provide meaningful support to drive progress against our initiatives and build on the momentum from the first half of the year."



Michael Bender

WHAT TO WATCH

BUSINESS

The Trade Policy Tango



- Under President Donald Trump, there are still plenty of tariff question marks as the industry heads toward the holidays.

BY EVAN CLARK

While predicting trade policy has long been the job of economists, lawyers and foreign policy experts who can lean on their love of process and rules, it's lately become the province of game theorists and gamblers.

The art of U.S. President Donald Trump's trade dealmaking has become something of a chaos machine for fashion supply chains.

That's because while Trump has threatened massive tariffs, put them into effect and then paused them within days or weeks, supply chains operate in months. And brands and retailers are left unsure how much their orders will actually cost when they arrive.

The stress of it all was ultra high in the spring and moderated some as certain players – like the European Union – cut trade deals. But there are still plenty of unknowns for the second half of this year. Among them:

- Will the costs of tariffs start to filter out to consumers?
- If so, how will they react?
- Will Trump make more unorthodox deals, like the one he struck with Nvidia, which gives the U.S. government a 15 percent cut of the sales of advanced computer chips in China? Or Intel, in which the U.S. government plans to take a 10 percent stake?
- How much will it cost to bring in apparel from China, where new duties are paused until Nov. 10 pending negotiations?

China accounts for 22 percent of textile and apparel imports to the U.S. and had been the production market of choice for many firms.

The decision to spend more time in talks with Beijing was welcomed by importers, but all the back and forth on how big the tariffs would be and when they would be applied has not been helpful.

Steve Lamar, president and chief executive officer of the American Apparel & Footwear Association, said the pause on higher tariffs would “help to avert devastating consequences like product elimination and business closures.”

“However, the constant cycle of deadline delays and vague deal terms has kept American companies and consumers stuck in the same holding pattern since April 1,” he continued. “This pattern has and continues to stifle innovation, strategic decision-making and long-term growth. As talks with China progress, we urge the administration to include a non-stacking provision, similar to agreements with Japan and the EU.

“Even with the pause on the worst-case rate, a 30 percent tariff on our largest trading partner is still untenably high. We can't forget that these tariffs are being added on top of existing ones, including the nearly century-old Smoot-Hawley MFN tariffs and the Section 301 tariffs. When stacked on top of these already steep tariffs, it amounts to double taxation on hardworking American families for everyday essentials like clothing and footwear.”

Hanes Moves collection.



BUSINESS

Dealmakers Who Refuse To Go Into Hiding

- While tariffs were expected to send the deal market into hibernation, buyers and sellers are still connecting.

BY EVAN CLARK

Uncertainty in business can cut two ways – it can push companies back into a protective stance or it can make them lean in.

And when it comes to the massive disruption and start and stop of U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war tariffs, an unexpected number of buyers seem willing to make their move, even if the landscape is changing in uncertain ways.

Unilever agreed to shell out \$1.5 billion for Dr. Squatch; E.I.f. Beauty cut a \$1 billion deal for Hailey Bieber's Rhode; Dick's Sporting Goods agreed to swallow up Foot Locker for \$2.4 billion, and Gildan Activewear cut a \$2.2 billion cash and stock deal to take on HanesBrands.

Clearly, some companies are ready to go big.

KPMG's tally found \$34.7 billion worth of consumer and retail deals in the second quarter, a 194 percent increase over a year earlier, even though the number of deals dropped 14.6 percent year-over-year to 496.

“Dealmakers doubled down on wellness, digital and distressed assets – prioritizing strategic clarity over deal count as consumer and retail M&A roared back in value,” said Frank Petraglia, a partner at KPMG Advisory, in the report.

There are some new incentives driving this – KPMG pointed to Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which is “incentivizing greater capital deployment through an enhanced cash tax shield for new investments and the immediate expensing of R&D, exploration costs and capital expenditures – boosting ROI and freeing up funds for expansion.”

The questions headed into the fall are now around whether tariffs will disrupt the market enough to force companies back or if other players come off the sidelines to consolidate the market and grab for more.

Digesting Gildan's deal to scoop up HanesBrands, Jay Sole, a UBS analyst, told WWD this month that: “This is not them playing defense. I think this is them playing offense. The combined company is definitely a stronger company than they were separately.”

Who else is going to come out and look to bulk up this fall for whatever comes next?

BUSINESS

Brands Seen Facing Scrutiny in Wake of Supply Chain Scandals

- Investigations uncovering ties of luxury brands such as Loro Piana, Valentino, Dior and Giorgio Armani with subcontractors involved in sweatshop schemes could dent the sector's aura of quality, exclusivity and ethics.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

MILAN – Over the past two years supply chain scandals have rocked the luxury fashion industry in Italy, shaking both its reputation and business practices.

Investigations by a Milan court that uncovered ties of luxury brands such as Loro Piana, Valentino, Dior and Giorgio Armani, among others, to subcontractors involved in sweatshop schemes have raised concerns about the industry's ability to manage its supply chains effectively.

Overall, prosecutors identified the brands' negligence in properly auditing their supply chain partners. As a result, all the above brands have been put under judicial administration to correct and enhance audits and oversight through court-mandated procedures, with Dior's and Giorgio Armani's probes fully resolved and the judicial oversight lifted.

Subcontracting is a common practice in the fashion industry, offering flexibility, but it can result in weak oversight. Additionally, these incidents have shined a light on the gap that

can exist between brands' public commitments to ethical standards and the reality of their supply chain operations. To this end, the Italian Competition Authority, or AGCM, imposed sanctions of 3.5 million euros on Giorgio Armani for alleged misleading advertising linked to its sustainability claims.

In response, brands have begun strengthening their internal controls and compliance measures. Loro Piana has reaffirmed its commitment to improving its supply chain auditing, severing ties with suppliers found in violation of its agreements, as did Valentino, Giorgio Armani and Dior.

The issue of supply chain oversight is not limited to isolated incidents, observers claimed, saying that the existing audit systems, which are often checklist-based, need to be restructured to provide more focused, risk-based assessments of each supplier. This shift could help mitigate future risks by addressing specific vulnerabilities within different tiers of the supply chain.

As brands work to improve their compliance measures, they also face external pressure from policymakers. The European Union is to enforce several new directives aimed at increasing transparency in supply chains, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, as well as the EU Forced Labor Regulation. The latter, set to take effect in 2027, will ban within the EU the sale of goods made using forced labor,

affecting all stages of the supply chain.

At the national level, Italy's fashion industry associations and trade unions have urged the creation of a mandatory, nationwide protocol promoted by the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy to standardize supply chain auditing practices. But legislation on the latter isn't expected to progress in the short term.

Meanwhile, the Milan Prefecture has introduced a memorandum of understanding to tackle worker exploitation, undeclared work, tax evasion and unfair contractual practices in the fashion supply chain. The initiative – undersigned by Confindustria Moda, Confindustria Accessori Moda and Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana, among other entities – is limited to the Lombardy region, but could lay the foundation for a countrywide system.

The pressure on high-end fashion brands to maintain their aura of quality, exclusivity and ethics is mounting amid an already challenging luxury landscape, which is being impacted by a global spending downturn.

Observers say that fashion companies and luxury groups must continue to improve their compliance mechanisms to address labor exploitation and work-related risks effectively, forging collaboration with lawmakers, their suppliers and industry associations to ensure the survival and prestige of the Made in Italy supply chain.



BUSINESS

Tapestry and Ralph Lauren Look to Extend Stock Run

- The companies have led fashion stocks higher this year as investors looked for both growth and safety.

BY EVAN CLARK

The traditional wisdom is that the stock market projects what's going to happen in six months.

Investors want to get in early on a good thing and then get out while the getting's still good. The game is about seeing where the growth is going to be and keeping just ahead of it.

It's an impossible game, of course.

But with all the millions of investors making their best guess, the wisdom of the crowd reveals itself, such as it is.

If Wall Street were a social media platform, it would be just so much more noise. But the stakes are high in the stock world, with fortunes won and lost and the IRL value of companies large and small set and reset on a moment-to-moment basis.

So far this year, investors have been looking for safety and putting money into already strong companies like Coach parent Tapestry Inc., Ralph Lauren Corp., Levi Strauss & Co., off-pricer TJX Cos. Inc. and Walmart Inc. – all of which have outperformed the S&P 500's 9.1 percent gain for 2025 so far.

Some beaten down companies did enjoy a rebound – shares of Kohl's Corp. have risen more than 18 percent this year – but they are the exception rather than the rule.

Investors justifying sky-high stock prices have to see a future full of even more growth, something the darlings of years past, including Abercrombie & Fitch Co., down more than 38 percent, and Lululemon Athletica Inc., down almost 48 percent, need to prove again.

And succeeding on Wall Street means proving it every day – a proposition only complicated by a retail world that is, well, more complicated.

If it's not the on-and-off tariffs of U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war or worries about the Federal Reserve, it's the rise of artificial intelligence or sagging consumer confidence.

The University of Michigan's Surveys of Consumers last month reported that its closely watched consumer sentiment index hit 58.2 – down 5.7 percent from July and off 14.3 percent from a year earlier.

It's a downturn that seems to be hitting most consumers and brands.

Joanne Hsu, director of the Surveys of Consumers, said: "This month's decrease was visible across groups by age, income and stock wealth. Moreover, perceptions of many aspects of the economy slipped. Buying conditions for durable goods subsided to their lowest reading in a year, and current personal finances declined 7 percent, both due to heightened concerns about high prices. Expectations for business conditions and labor markets contracted in August as well."

That, along with all the geopolitical uncertainty, makes picking the winners from the losers all the trickier.

Going into the fall, Oliver Chen, an analyst at TD Cowen, gave a primer on retail stocks that saw both consumers and retailers as "on edge."

Chen recommended "need" retail stocks like Walmart and the stronger "want" companies like E.I.f. in beauty and Revolve in digital fashion.

His least favorite sectors in the market included department and apparel stores like Kohl's Corp., Macy's Inc. and Victoria's Secret & Co. as well as companies like Capri Holdings or Tapestry Inc. that have exposure to sourcing in China or Vietnam.

RETAIL STOCKS SO FAR FOR 2025

TAPESTRY AND RALPH LAUREN HAVE LED THE WAY IN RETAIL'S STOCK RALLY SO FAR THIS YEAR.

	9/2/2025	CHANGE SINCE 12/31/2024
TAPESTRY INC.	\$102.79	58.7%
RALPH LAUREN CORP.	\$311.02	35.6%
LEVI STRAUSS & CO.	\$22.63	33.7%
LUXEXPERIENCE	\$9.43	32.8%
ULTA BEAUTY INC.	\$532.52	22.4%
THE ESTÉE LAUDER COS.	\$90.81	22.3%
KOHL'S CORP.	\$16.13	18.2%
TJX COS. INC.	\$138.53	15.8%
WALMART INC.	\$97.85	9.1%
S&P 500	6,415.54	9.1%
KERING	238.6 euros	3.3%
AMAZON.COM	\$225.34	2.7%
COMPAGNIE FINANCIÈRE RICHEMONT	\$139	0.80%
NIKE INC.	\$74.29	-0.70%
GAP INC.	\$22.62	-2%
CAPRI HOLDINGS	\$20.59	-2.2%
H&M HENNES & MAURITZ	138.3 kronor	-4.9%
KONTOOR BRANDS INC.	\$79.33	-5.6%
HERMÈS INTERNATIONAL	2,040 euros	-11.6%
AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS INC.	\$13.51	-16.3%
MACY'S INC.	\$13.49	-18%
LVMH MOËT HENNESSY LOUIS VUITTON	513 euros	-18%
ON HOLDING	\$44.79	-18.2%
PVH CORP.	\$85.96	-18.6%
TARGET CORP.	\$92.44	-29.5%
VF CORP.	\$14.84	-30%
ABERCROMBIE & FITCH CO.	\$91.93	-38.5%
LULULEMON ATHLETICA INC.	\$200.21	-47.6%

Source: Yahoo Finance, Google Finance



Jessika Roswall, EU commissioner for the Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy.

SUSTAINABILITY

Brands Seek Clarity as EU Sits at Regulatory Crossroads

● Manufacturers in Asia are staying on the sustainability course amid the constant change in tariffs and proposed regulations.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS — As European Union policymakers push ahead with reforms that will impact the textile industry, the coming months will be a pivotal period for clarity on legislation aimed at shaping the future of fashion in the bloc.

Two key proposals — the Environmental Omnibus Package and the Circular Economy Act — are expected to be published before the end of the year. These should aim to “simplify” and harmonize regulations around waste, industrial emissions, extended producer responsibility (EPR) and the use of recycled materials.

In mid-July, the European Commission published a six-week call for evidence, catching off guard many groups and industry stakeholders.

Harmonization in the registration, reporting and payment systems across different member states is widely seen as a plus for regulating textile waste and extended producer responsibility schemes, and could create an easy, single platform in the EU.

However, concerns have been raised by industry stakeholders about a rushed and opaque consultation process, with some fearing prior targets will be watered down.

“Things are changing,” said Clélia Ortscheidt, consultant at Ohana Public Affairs, a Brussels-based environmental legislative consultancy. “A lot of people are very worried about it, and a bit concerned by the last minute, very short time period for not only asking for feedback, but also putting forward the proposal.”

That should be released in late October or early November, but due to the short time period, will be published without an impact assessment.

Brands and suppliers are watching closely to see whether the final text of the Omnibus will include the textile sector and exactly how far-reaching its impact will be.

Meanwhile, the Circular Economy Act,

due for formal proposal in the second half of 2026, is widely seen as more forward-looking, with ambitions to make recycled materials price competitive with virgin materials.

Despite all the moving parts and uncertainty, most large brands are staying the course on their previously announced circularity and recycling strategies, she added.

Manufacturers Stay the Course On Sustainability Amid Tariff And Regulatory Uncertainty

Despite growing geopolitical instability, tariffs and unclear ESG regulations, global apparel manufacturers are holding firm on their long-term sustainability commitments, according to Cascale, the international industry organization formerly known as the Sustainable Apparel Coalition. This is despite brands reassessing supply chains in light of shifting European sustainability regulations and the whack-a-mole unpredictability of U.S. tariffs.

“We haven’t seen any backtrack,” said Cascale senior director of strategic growth Lisa Domoney. “We see brands continuing with their commitments.”

Manufacturers across Asia have taken lessons from the pandemic supply chain shocks, said Domoney, thus the response from key sourcing countries and manufacturers has been measured with a long-term perspective.

“The manufacturing community is not as panicky as before. They’ve managed through these crises previously. It becomes almost business as usual. Asia has a longer-term view. We’re seeing a shift in that global dynamic,” she said.

Many countries, specifically in Southeast Asia, are ready to step into a leadership role on sustainability steps as the U.S. backtracks and Europe flounders. “It has become like we’re just leading through this.”

Instead, manufacturers are continuing with steady progress rather than panic and continuing with decarbonization plans and factory improvements despite the shifting regulatory landscape.

“They know that sustainable, resilient supply chains deliver longer-term

competitive advantages,” Domoney said. “Sudden disruptions undermine the progress that we’ve already made within the industry. Sustainability doesn’t become just a sideline; it is a business strategy.”

For example, Bangladesh’s Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association is continuing with its plans to see 50 percent of sustainable material sourcing, 30 percent GHG emissions reductions, 20 percent renewable energy and zero hazardous chemicals discharge by 2030.

While brands are reassessing their bottom lines, Domoney emphasized the business case for long-term thinking and sticking with published commitments — even if regulations do change — and abiding by responsible purchasing practices.

“During any period of instability, short-term thinking is a reflex. That’s what causes the harm,” she said, noting the sudden sourcing shifts “lead to disruption, financial hardship for suppliers and broken trust.”

Looking ahead, Cascale’s annual forum will address decarbonization, decent work standards, tariff impacts and audit fatigue.

On audit reform, the group is pushing for greater standardization rather than the need to obtain multiple certifications for different brands, which will be a key topic at the group’s forum in Hong Kong, Sept. 15 to 17.

Industry Faces Compliance Countdown on the EU Digital Product Passport

The fashion and textile industry is bracing for a seismic shift as the EU’s Digital Product Passport (DPP) legislation edges toward its 2027 compliance deadline. But with fundamental questions still unanswered and technology in flux, brands are navigating a murky regulatory future.

Officially part of the EU’s Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), the DPP aims to establish a standardized system of product traceability, detailing sourcing, materials, environmental impact and more. Though the umbrella legislation came into force in July 2024, sector-specific timelines vary. For textiles, mandatory compliance is slated for mid-2027.

But with just two years to go, much remains undefined.

“There’s still a lot of things unanswered,” said Tim Bodil, vice president of enterprise and digital passport at e-commerce software provider Pimberly, which works with Harvey Nichols and sports retailer JD.

“There are still a lot of questions around where the responsibility will lie in the supply chain. If your supplier doesn’t give you the right level of product data, then how are you going to provide that to your consumer? All those questions are still to be answered, and there’s quite a lot to do over the course of the next two years,” he said.

That lack of clarity is particularly challenging for small and mid-sized brands, many of which lack the infrastructure to handle the necessary data and changing regional regulations.

Bodil said they are increasingly turning to new AI technologies to comply with upcoming regulations, including tools that can extract data from product photographs, such as identifying materials, colors and components.

“AI provides smaller brands with access to the kind of computer power and automation that was previously only available to large organizations,” he explained. “It’s going to help automate the process of compliance checking, sourcing validation and even consumer engagement.”

However, the technology is still in “very early days” of application. “The biggest challenge is not the cost, it’s the data. If you’ve got good quality product data, then AI is going to do a much better job of understanding and interpreting that,” he said.

As for brands wondering how to prepare, the focus is still on streamlining information.

“Product data will have a currency in the future in a way that it hasn’t historically. Brands need to focus on preparing for that shift,” Bodil said. “Because ultimately, it’s the data that will drive compliance, differentiation and value.”



A worker stitches apparel at a garment factory in Vietnam.

EXCLUSIVE

Inside Helena Christensen's First Furniture Design for BoConcept

● The supermodel, photographer and creative director is deepening her involvement in the design world with the Denmark-based furniture label.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – Supermodel Helena Christensen has taken a deeper plunge into the world of interiors with her first furniture design. The new Ø lounge chair for upscale Danish brand BoConcept is a mix between a living chair and a sofa.



Helena Christensen poses with her first design, the Ø chair, for BoConcept as its global artistic director.

Inspired by the serene beauty of Denmark's small islands, Ø was envisaged as a cocoon-like experience.

"I like the symbol 'Ø,'" Christensen said. "I was born on an island and find them so magical because they're surrounded by water. Our lounge chair is like a cozy little island in your home."

The piece was launched with a new, richly textured fabric called Lucca, which she also designed for BoConcept. Lucca is characterized by its soft, brushed surface and is available in beige, white, green, red and camel. The chair is currently being sold on BoConcept's website, with prices starting at 2,771.60 euros.

In February, Christensen revealed her role as global artistic director or BoConcept and unveiled her first project, the Sweet Art furniture collection, which was designed by fellow Dane, Charlotte Høncke, an industrial designer-turned-furniture and lighting expert.

In her role as global artistic director, Christensen works with designers for all collaborations and releases and has also been tasked with amplifying the visibility of emerging Danish design talent.

Retailer BoConcept, which was founded in 1952 in Denmark, has more than 300 stores spanning 64 countries. The brand works with award-winning designers to create collections of furniture, accessories and lighting for private homes and business spaces.

Under the heading "Live Ekstraordinær"

(Live Extraordinarily), BoConcept also offers interior design and customization services for public and private spaces.

In February, BoConcept chief executive officer Mikael Kruse Jensen told WWD that the appointment of Christensen reflected its commitment to advancing Danish philosophy of design on a global scale.

Also at the time, Christensen said that her Danish and Peruvian heritage clearly influence her design process. "Growing up with a Danish father and a Peruvian mother, I find myself drawn to a mix of Nordic coolness and vibrant South American influences," she enthused. "I love organic shapes. I am using soft fabrics, velour and boucle. You'll see soft pastels in the collection."

Christensen's own photographic prints inspired by flora and fauna have been featured in BoConcept stores and galleries and gave birth to the spring summer 2025 Flora collection of home accessories, which is an extension of her creative universe. The company said that larger artworks, two sculptures and a ceramic vase and rug designed by Christensen were added to the mini collection. The rug was designed in partnership with renowned Copenhagen rugmakers Linie Designs, handcrafted with thousands of individual knots and woven with beige and soft rose tones.

"It started with my close-up photographs of peonies and the amazing natural layered detailing of the petals. From here, we were able to imagine 3D

The Ø chair and a rug designed by Helena Christensen for BoConcept.



pieces, like the vase and the sculptures," she said.

This is far from Christensen's first foray into the creative world. In 1999 she cofounded Nylon magazine, launched the concept store Butik in New York and collaborated with Habitat London on bestselling designs. Today she is part of the lifestyle brand Staerkandchristensen alongside another fellow Dane, Camilla Staerk, who is known for her designs of women's and men's ready-to-wear and accessories. Together, the duo produce sculptural home objects and modern artisanal designs and has worked on collaborations with New York-based studio Bower and Danish designer Kasper Salto. They are currently working on a prefab house project with Los Angeles-based, Icelandic architect Gulla Jonsdottir.

BUSINESS

Madison Avenue 'Steps Up' For Fashion

● For the second year in a row, the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District's annual "Welcome Back Saturday" fall event will support the CFDA's scholarship fund.

BY DAVID MOIN

Madison Avenue is preparing to demonstrate how much hospitality really matters.

On Sept. 20, the second annual "Step Up for Fashion" returns as the centerpiece for Madison Avenue's "Welcome Back Saturday" event, which celebrates the return of fall fashion, shopping along the famous luxury retail venue.

The event supports the Council of Fashion Designers of America's scholarship fund and is organized by the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District, which covers the stretch along the avenue from 57th Street to 86th Street.

"We created our Welcome Back Saturday event during the pandemic just when people were first coming back to the stores. It's been all about the stores and brands really extending hospitality to their clients who are coming back to city after

being away for the summer," said Matthew Bauer, president of the Madison Avenue BID. Over the years, the programming has involved bringing stylists to the stores, refreshments, music and an antique auto show, which was staged last year.

Step Up for Fashion is a key added component to Welcome Back Saturday. "Last year was the first time we partnered with the CFDA [the Council of Fashion Designers of America] and it went really well," Bauer said. "People enjoyed it. It not only showed the face of Madison Avenue as one of the world's great fashion destinations, but also as a welcoming spot for the clients of the stores and brands, as they returned back to their homes in New York."

In keeping with the group's tradition of offering a philanthropic component to public events, stores will donate 10 percent of their sales on the day to the CFDA scholarship fund.

Bauer said the number of stores participating has increased to about three dozen so far, and is still growing from the 25 that participated last year. Primarily, it is fashion stores that are participating, though there will be other retailers participating, including those selling home goods, eyewear, jewelry and fragrance.

Models in the latest fashions will appear in stores and be positioned on two-foot by four-foot platforms situated in front of retailers. Approximately 35 models are expected, and they will appear all at once, at 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., making a big impression. Many of the models at are being provided by the Fenton Models agency.

Visitors will also be able to get photographed by Andrew Werner on a red carpet from noon to 5 p.m. The photos will be available for free via a link.

"Madison Avenue stands at the heart of both American and global fashion and

luxury and we are proud to see many young and legacy CFDA brands represented on this world-famous avenue," said Steven Kolb, CFDA's chief executive officer and president. "We're deeply thankful to the Madison Avenue BID for supporting CFDA scholarships and helping us advance our mission to nurture the next generation of American fashion talent."

"Fashion on Madison Avenue is certainly all about artistry, craft and style, but it is also about connectivity, gracious hospitality and philanthropy," Bauer said in his prepared statement. "Step Up for Fashion showcases our boutiques' collections in a warm, welcoming and accessible manner, while supporting the next generation of design leaders through the CFDA's Scholarship Fund."

Here's the list of brands that have signed up for "Welcome Back Saturday" so far:

- alice + olivia
- Anine Bing
- Anne Fontaine
- Baobab Collection
- Carolina Herrera
- Etro
- FloraOnMadison
- Generation Love
- Jenni Kayne
- L'agence
- Lafayette 148
- LoveShackFancy
- Mackage
- Malia Mills
- Marina B
- Marina Rinaldi
- Max Mara
- Michael Kors Collection



Models at the 2024 "Step Up for Fashion" event on Madison Avenue.

- Nardos
- Onia
- Paige
- Parfums de Marly
- Paul Morelli
- Peserico
- Ramy Brook
- Rubin & Chapelle
- See Eyewear
- St. John Knits
- Tanya Taylor
- Veronica Beard
- Veronica De Pianta
- Vince
- Wellness+ Studio
- Wolford
- Zadig & Voltaire

BEAUTY

Agent Nateur Is Getting a Refresh

Agent Nateur Holi (Stick)

Jena Covello



● Founder Jena Covello discusses developing the brand's deodorant herself after an eye-opening Ayahuasca ceremony, tapping into key essentials from toothpaste to skin care and taking Agent Nateur's branding to the next level.

BY EMILY BURNS

For Jena Covello, Agent Nateur started with an Ayahuasca ceremony and a need for clean deodorant.

In 2015, Covello launched Agent Nateur with its hero stock-keeping unit Holi

(Stick), \$28, a deodorant formulated with plant oils, butters and beeswax and without aluminum, as she struggled to find a truly clean option on the market. Now, 10 years later, to celebrate the brand's anniversary, Covello is launching a reformulated version of the deodorant in a variety of synthetic-free scents, updating Agent Nateur's branding and launching a variety of new products, including Holi (Mag) Advanced Daily Magnesium Complex, \$94, and Holi (Water) Crème, \$165. According to industry sources, Agent Nateur, which is available at retailers like Erewhon, Revolve, The Detox Market and more, is expected to reach \$25 million in sales in 2025, up 62 percent year-over-year.

In 2014, Covello was dealing with a variety of health concerns which ultimately led to the idea for Agent Nateur.

"I have stage four endometriosis and adenomyosis... I had enough estrogen for an entire block of women. My naturopaths were telling me that I needed to avoid aluminum antiperspirant, because it's an endocrine disruptor and it can mimic estrogen," Covello said. "My father had been telling me since the '90s to not use aluminum antiperspirant. I thought he was crazy."

While Covello was originally hesitant about clean deodorant, a certain experience got her on board.

"I had done an Ayahuasca ceremony. I know that has something to do with it because two weeks later, I was cooking deodorant out of thin air," she said. "I formulated it for eight months. It must have been 100 times or something before I got the consistency right in a stick."

Now Covello has reintroduced the deodorants in five synthetic-fragrance-free scents derived from natural sources, including Tarte Tropézienne, 8233 Blackburn, Saint Honoré Roses, Ambroxan Cloud and Cap D'antibes. According to Covello, the new scents have been a hit and could inform a future expansion into clean, synthetic-free fragrances.

While clean deodorant has become one of the most popular products in body care with a slew of heritage brands tapping in, Covello said the brand received a lot of pushback in the early days. However, she was committed to the category and attended school in France to study natural cosmetics and fragrance to expand Agent Nateur into a variety of categories including body care, makeup, skin care, oral care, hair care and supplements, some of which are developed in partnership with functional medicine expert Dr. Will Cole. Per Covello, Agent Nateur's number-one

bestseller Holi (Mane), \$99, has been a core driver for the business, particularly after influencer and comedian Esther Povitsky posted a viral TikTok about it in 2021.

Covello continues to double down across categories on a mission to create a fully clean routine. The latest launches include Holi (Water) Crème, \$165, a lightweight and fast absorbing moisturizer, and Holi (Mag) Advanced Daily Magnesium Complex, \$94, a key lime pie-flavored liposomal blend of magnesiums to support a variety of functions. Agent Nateur recently celebrated this launch with a soft-serve truck at Melrose Place in Los Angeles.

While Agent Nateur fans are asking for clean alternatives across categories, Covello predicts that toothpaste will be the next product to undergo a makeover like deodorant did.

In addition to new launches, Covello has refreshed the brand's packaging, which has all been rolling out this summer after two years in development.

"We wanted to elevate the packaging to feel luxurious and special. I wanted it to have an old-world feel to it," she said, adding that everything will feature an embossed Agent Nateur logo. "I wanted something that reminded me of my time in France and Italy... I'm hoping that people are going to photograph it on their shelves, like, 'Wow, this looks so beautiful on my shelf.'"

In terms of what's next, Covello has a slew of products lined up, including clean lip liner and lipstick, as well as ideas for a variety of new supplements. This approach for an entirely clean routine spanning beauty and wellness categories from toothpaste to sunscreen has worked well for the brand.

"I'm a Gemini, and I like to formulate and release things that I'm passionate about. That's why my brain wants to do everything," Covello said. "We have a bestseller in each category, but we're trying to figure out what to focus on moving forward."

BEAUTY

Dr. Diamond's Metacine Bulks Up Offering With Moisturizer

● The brand's fourth product, and first to sit outside of its InstaFacial collection, will bow Sept. 23.

BY JAMES MANSO

Dr. Diamond's Metacine is building out its arsenal of treatment-inspired products - and is looking to one of facial skin care's largest segments to do so.

The brand, cofounded by Los Angeles-based plastic surgeon Dr. Jason Diamond, is debuting the Hydr/o Bioactive Hydrolipid Barrier Moisturizer, which will retail for \$300. It will launch Sept. 23 on the brand's website before rolling out to its retailers the following week, which include Bluemercury and Nordstrom. From there, it will be a part of the brand's launch on Amazon later this year.

Dr. Diamond's Metacine is growing, contrary to the decelerating demand of luxury skin care in the U.S. It has "a lot of new customers, a lot of repeat customers, the roadmap's coming into clarity, and the teams are gelling more and more," said Mark Ferdman, the brand's president. "We want to bottle that and keep going on the same trajectory."

Ferdman didn't comment on sales but industry sources think the moisturizer

could reach between \$3.5 million and \$4 million in sales for its first year.

Much like the existing products in the brand's offering, the new moisturizer derives inspiration from Dr. Diamond's in-office treatments. The preexisting assortment all falls under the InstaFacial collection, which is meant to mimic the surgeon's proprietary treatment of the same name that combines laser, platelet-rich plasma and microneedling.

"For the InstaFacial collection, it's about the dermis and how we turn on the dermis. Overall skin health has to do with more than just that layer," said Dr. Jessica Combs, cofounder and chief executive officer of the brand.

The consumer appetite for a moisturizer is there, Combs said. "We've heard that they want a moisturizer both from the consumers directly and from the retail space," she said. "We're going to continue to do things that look at the treatments we do in office, and use those as inspiration behind the products."

The formula features a bioactive hydrolipid infusion with 27 biomimetic micro-molecules, such as ceramides, essential fatty acids and plant-based cholesterol; seven different weights of hyaluronic acid; biomimetic natural moisture factors that act as humectants;



Dr. Diamond's Metacine Hydr/o Bioactive Hydrolipid Barrier Moisturizer

and essential fatty acids such as linoleic, linolenic acids and phyto-cholesterol.

"When you're optimizing the function and really getting antiaging skin care right, you want to fortify the barrier. That's what we do in-clinic to optimize the function and make sure everything underneath the surface is going to activate properly," said Tammy Goodarzi, cofounder and chief brand officer. "That's where the discussion started to formulate a bioactive moisturizer."

Part of the product's mandate was to work synergistically with the existing products, too.

"Think of the InstaFacial as your

favorite outfit," she said. "And think of this moisturizer as your raincoat."

Supercharging the formula with actives was important to Diamond, who leverages his patients as informal focus groups for feedback. "We have discerning patients who have used everything, spend lots of money on skin care," he said. "We hear all day long it's the first product range that really does something."

The brand will be investing heavily in the marketing piece, from digital and social campaigns to out-of-home activations and a private event in New York to herald the launch.

BEAUTY

Actress Jane Seymour On The Body Firm's Latest Crêpe Erase Launch

● The brand, best known for its Crêpe Erase line, has launched its newest product: The Body Resurfacing Treatment.

BY EMILY BURNS

For actress Jane Seymour, beauty is all about connecting mind, body and spirit – oftentimes starting with a bit of skin and body care.

The star, known for cult classic films like “Somewhere in Time,” television shows like “Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman” and recent series “Harry Wild,” has been a longtime partner of the brand The Body Firm, which launched in 2015 and is best known for its Crêpe Erase products that target skin laxity.

In celebration of the brand's latest launch Body Resurfacing Treatment, which is meant to be used in conjunction with the Body Repair Treatment as a serum-like preparation step, Seymour discussed how she uses the product, her history with the company, her wellness must-dos and how she became the “Crêpe Erase girl.”

WWD: How do you use the new The Body Firm Resurfacing Body Treatment?

J.S.: We worked on this for a long time, but when I tried it, I couldn't believe it. Immediately, even before I put the Crêpe Erase treatment on afterward, I noticed a huge difference in my skin. I use it everywhere: my neck, my chest, my arms, my legs. It makes them plumped up and shiny and ready to receive the Crêpe Erase [Body Repair Treatment.]

WWD: After working with The Body Firm for 10 years, you've become synonymous with Crêpe Erase. What has that looked like?

J.S.: It doesn't matter where I go in the world. If I go to a fancy restaurant somewhere, someone will come running over to me and they won't talk to me about my movies. They actually start touching my

skin. [They're] like, ‘Oh, do you really use it?’ Airports, everywhere. I've now come to the conclusion that that's just my life. I am the Crêpe Erase girl....I'm a walking Crêpe Erase exhibit.

WWD: The Body Firm is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. What was it like when you first started working with the brand?

J.S.: To be perfectly honest, when I was asked to do it, I kind of pooh-poohed the whole thing. I thought, “Well, this isn't going to work, but I'll give it a try.” I used it, and I didn't tell anyone around me that I was using it. By the second day, I was doing my workout across the street [where] I do pilates and gyrotics. The lady I work with is very into plastic [surgery] and this and that. She and all her clients, they all do every expensive thing you possibly do. She said, “Oh, you've done a skin resurfacing,” and I said, “No, why?” She said, “Your skin looks amazing. What have you done?”

WWD: Did you get any friends or family hooked on the product?

J.S.: [When I first tried it] my sister, who's from England and is very practical and always a naysayer about anything I do until it's proven to be right, happened to be staying here with her girlfriend, who's a general practitioner. They said, “What is this?” Because they noticed a difference, I said, “Well, why don't you try it? Then it won't just be me deciding.” They tried it, and the doctor said to me, “I need this. I need it for my practice.” That was when I just turned around and I said [to The Body Firm team], “OK, let's discuss more.”

WWD: What has your experience been like collaborating with The Body Firm team over the years?

J.S.: [I asked] can we also address the whole body? That's where I've been so excited about my collaboration with Crêpe Erase, because they listen. When I say,

“Listen, my neck is a big issue. What do we do?” We come up with this amazing neck treatment...” What about the nutritional aspect of it? What about coming up with vitamins and supplements? How can we do beauty from within as well?” I feel that beauty is body, mind and spirit, so we came up with Youthful Essence, these amazing supplements, which I use every day.

WWD: What does your morning skin care routine look like?

J.S.: When I'm filming, I get up at 5 or 6 in the morning. I take a shower. I use the body exfoliant. I have a pat dry. I put the Crêpe Erase [Body Repair Treatment] on everywhere. I put the Neck Repair on and then if I know I'm going out in the sun, I put sunscreen on. What I found recently is I actually am a little greedy, and I like putting the [Body Resurfacing Treatment] on as well after the shower, so I've been doing both.

WWD: What does your wellness routine look like?

J.S.: I get my my cup of coffee, my jump-start for the day. I like it black. I usually only just have the one cup. Then I use my Youthful Essence with a scoop of collagen. I drink it immediately. What I love about that is I don't know whether I'm going to be able to come across fresh kale, spinach, berries and all the the nutrients that we have in that powder during the day, especially if I'm traveling. I know I am one and done. I have done what I need for my body nutritionally. I stretch. I do stomach exercises. I do bridges and all those things that are good for your stomach and your back.

[I also] take time to deep breathe, to be in nature, just to come from a place of gratitude. I always tell people, for me, meditation is like a washing machine with a load of whites in it, and one red thing. That red thing is the irritant in my life, and it goes round and round. I can either attach to it, or I can just go, “Hey, yep, I know. I know who you are. I know what you are. I really don't need you. Bye, bye.” As it comes back again, it's now pink. By the time it comes back again, I don't really notice it anymore.

WWD: How does your fitness routine change when you're on set?

J.S.: It doesn't matter where I am, and they laugh at me on set because between scenes, while I'm running my lines, I'm invariably doing some relevés. I'm

The Body Firm Crêpe Erase Body Resurfacing Treatment



going up on my toes, bending my knees, straightening them out, doing plies.

WWD: Have you picked up any beauty or wellness tips on set?

J.S.: I can't say sunblock often enough, because I definitely was part of a generation that believed that you really had to train your skin to get brown. Now, I wish somebody had told me a long time ago, you know, you're basically burning your skin. I actually did know George Hamilton and hang out with him, and he gave me a reflector board [for tanning.] [Now,] I'm very aware, especially when I'm outside, of making sure that I'm covered. It's why I wear hats when I can, or I stay in the shade.

WWD: Do you have any other wellness secrets you swear by?

J.S.: Attitude is everything. I see so many women [in their] mid-40s, 50s, who hide under a rock, and they just go, “OK, well, I'm done.” You're not invisible. This is your time. If I have a message, it's the best time of your life is right now. My mother always said, “If you have a purpose in life, you can deal with any strife in your life.” I really believe that, and if part of your purpose is to be the best, healthiest, best looking, healthiest human being, body, mind and spirit that you can be, having practices...it's your gift to you, and your gift to you will attract the rest of the world to wanting to be around you. They'll go, “Wait a minute. You're vibrant [and] alive. You have energy, and you have a spring in your step. I want some of that.”

BEAUTY

Cracking the Refill Code With L'Oréal's Luxe Division

● In the U.S., the division that entails Giorgio Armani, Lancôme, Prada Beauty and more is debuting refill fountains in select Dillard's locations.

BY JAMES MANSON

L'Oréal Luxe is introducing a new, sustainably minded initiative Stateside.

The luxury division of the world's largest beauty conglomerate is introducing refill fountains at four Dillard's locations, which began rolling out in August and will service key fragrance pillars such as Lancôme's La Vie Est Belle and La Vie Est Belle Elixir, YSL Beauté's Libre, Mugler's Angel and Alien scents and Giorgio Armani Beauty's Acqua di Giò.

It mirrors similar initiatives that have existed in other geographies, including Europe, and with other products. Mugler, for example, inspired the initiative and

has had refill fountains in retail sales points since 1992. “We thought it would be interesting to expand that to other juices,” said Silvia Galfo, president of L'Oréal's Luxe division in the U.S.

As for the timing, Galfo credited a few factors, including L'Oréal's focus on sustainability as a key value, consumer adoption, replenishment rates and making sure beauty advisers were properly educated on how to drive the accelerating consumer behavior.

Perhaps most importantly, it comes at a time of growth for the business. “L'Oréal Luxe in the U.S. is doing well. We are growing ahead of the market, and what's doing very well for us in terms of categories is fragrance – we have almost a third of market share,” said Galfo. “We're very strong in women's and in men's, and growth is coming from both newer franchises and legacy fragrances.”

Among the most anticipated launches are the new Ralph's Club New York launch



fronted by Usher, and the new Prada Paradigme fronted by Tom Holland. The legacy front, those juices are also getting an environmentally friendly reincarnation – but one that plays to the nature of the products. For La Vie Est Belle Elixir from Lancôme, for example, buying a 100-ml refill instead of two 50-ml bottles saves 73 percent glass, 66 percent on plastic and 61 percent on cardboard. Those compare similarly to YSL Libre,

Prada Paradoxe Eau de Parfum and Mugler Angel Eau de Parfum.

If the existing performance of the Angel refills is any indication, it won't take much for the other juices to gain traction as refillables, either. “About 25 percent or 30 percent of our business is done with the refill,” Galfo said of Mugler fragrances. “The gesture of coming in with your bottle, getting a little service – we see success with that.”

As for why to kick off the effort with Dillard's, Galfo thinks the high-touch nature of the retailer's service will drive adoption. “They have a very strong service model,” she said. “The clients are loyal to our fragrances, the staffing is hungry for education, and they have a very strong clienteling approach with their consumers. They do a lot of after-hour activations as well.”

Galfo isn't opposed to broadening the fragrances available for refill, either. “YSL Myslf and Valentino Born in Roma could be part of it. All of these could be developed and we could have more options in the future,” she said. “We need full adoption of the sales staff on the floor, and there will be a lot of local marketing, local social media targeting, and targeting local influencers.”

Fashion Scoops



Sydney Sweeney in Jimmy Choo's fall 2025 campaign.

Sweeney's Return

Sydney Sweeney is back as the face of Jimmy Choo's fall 2025 advertising campaign.

The "Euphoria" actor poses against a backdrop of an intimate photo shoot set with lighting equipment and a director's chair visible in the campaign while wearing the brand's Tylor 60 heeled loafers, Isa 80 and Scarlett 95 pumps, and carrying the Bar Hobo bag in a zebra print and a brown suede.

"I always think that the shoes finish an outfit, reveal personality and adjust the mood. For autumn the low loafer, Tylor, is important — smart, functional and fun when she is adorned with a drizzle of crystal fringes — just how Jimmy Choo does a loafer," creative director Sandra Choi told WWD.

She added that the campaign is a reinforcement of the "power of shoes and accessories to transform, acting out the possible characters. The notion that glamour is a feeling."

Sweeney made her campaign debut with the British luxury accessories brand in May 2024 for the spring 2024 campaign shot in Palm Springs, Calif.

In one of the fall 2025 campaign images, the actor is wearing blue denim jeans with her Jimmy Choo loafers.

The actor has become a topic of discussion in recent months and the subject of social media criticism after appearing in an American Eagle Outfitters' fall denim campaign titled "Sydney Sweeney Has Great Jeans."

According to industry

sources, Jimmy Choo's fall 2025 campaign was shot before the U.S. retailer's campaign. — HIKMAT MOHAMMED

Spark Joy

If the end of summer — or the news cycle — leaves you in need of a pick-me-up, Courrèges' fall campaign breaking Wednesday might just do the trick.

Fluttering across a pristine white background is an explosion of multicolored confetti, in a collaboration with New York-based artist Dan Colen and the Sky High Farm Biennial, an exhibition in upstate New York now on its inaugural edition.

The artist's 2010 paintings "Moments Like This Never Last," collected in a book, were a key reference for the French brand's fall collection, where artistic director Nicolas Di Felice explored twisting constructions inspired by party streamers. During the show a wind machine gently lifted the set's metallic confetti upward.

Di Felice recalled how the book "simply made [him] feel good" when he came across it in his personal library.

"While the news felt



bleak and heavy, this book offered a moment of joy, something simple and radical. Like a beautiful, weightless burst of energy," he added. "I felt it was a wonderful response to the mood of the times."

"These confetti — simple, colorful geometric shapes on a white background — inspired me both in terms of their meaning and their form: a commitment to optimism as a means of confronting the hardships of contemporary life," he added.

While discussing how to collaborate on a campaign around the collection, the designer said he was "blown away by all the amazing work Dan is doing with the Sky High Farm project," a nonprofit organization that addresses food security and nutrition among New Yorkers.

"For me and for Courrèges, it was important to deeply partner with him around a meaningful project such as his first biennial," he added. "Supporting food sovereignty through an art initiative is sharing a message of hope and solidarity, generating help for people in need."

Plus, the designer "loved the idea of someone coming across a shower of colorful confetti — like a breath of fresh air — as they flip through the advertising pages of a magazine."

The campaign breaks Wednesday on Courrèges' digital channels. — LILY TEMPLETON

Paris in The Fall

Australian contemporary brand Aje will make its Paris Fashion Week debut on Oct. 7, with an off-schedule show called Rebel Rebel at Palais de Tokyo.

Aje was founded in Sydney in 2008 by Adrian Norris and Edwina Forest, and has 45 stores across Australia and New Zealand. It sells through more than 70 international retailers including Net-a-porter and

Farfetch.

The brand, which specializes in colorful daywear and occasion pieces, will open its first international concession at the Printemps Paris flagship in February.

"Paris holds a deeply personal place in our journey, from our long-standing wholesale endeavors to my time spent living there," said Forest, the brand's creative director.

Forest said the return "represents both a sense of homecoming and a bold step forward," and will allow the brand to showcase its "craft and creativity on a global stage."

Norris, chief executive officer of Aje, said that after 17 years, "showing in Paris is a proud and pivotal milestone for us."

The duo added they chose Paris because "it has always been the global stage for creativity and craftsmanship. Our niche lies in offering a modern, ready-to-wear interpretation of artisanal design, one that pushes construction, detail and quality at a price point the market is calling for amid a slowdown in luxury."

Norris and Forest said Aje's strength lies in "translating runway pieces into wearable garments that our customer can seamlessly add to her wardrobe. As we look ahead, our focus is on building thoughtful distribution across Europe and the U.S., with partners who share our values and commitment to craft."

The Paris spring season is scheduled to run from Sept. 29 to Oct. 7, and will feature a slew of designer debuts.

New creative directors will show their first women's ready-to-wear collections at Dior, Chanel, Balenciaga,

Aje founders Adrian Norris and Edwina Forest.



Loewe, Mugler, Jean Paul Gaultier, Maison Margiela and Carven, reflecting a period of unprecedented creative upheaval amid the global slowdown in luxury spending. — SAMANTHA CONTI

Genny's New Star

Genny's creative director Sara Cavazza Facchini has tapped Nicola Peltz Beckham to front the brand's fall 2025 ad campaign.

According to the designer, the strength and personal style of the actress and director, who is the wife of Brooklyn Beckham, embody the values of the brand, celebrating authenticity and inner determination. "Nicola represents the Genny woman: elegant, sophisticated and with a touch of boldness" Cavazza Facchini stated.

Nicola Peltz Beckham

debuted as a director and writer last year with the movie "Lola." The actress, who counts 3.1 million followers on Instagram, is seen wearing pieces from the brand's fall 2025 collection, including tailored suits in an off-white hue with a peplum fitted jacket or black pants with a bandeau top and jewel details. In one image she leans on a stool lounging in a bold red strapless evening gown. The campaign was styled by Alex White.

The photos were lensed by the Italian brothers Luca and Alessandro Morelli.

Peltz Beckham's bond with the Italian brand is further strengthened by a personal memory of her mother and an archival Genny blouse.

Cavazza Facchini has previously selected models and social media personalities including Georgina Rodriguez and Sara Sampaio for her Genny campaigns.

— ANDREA ONATE ▶

Nicola Peltz Beckham fronts the Genny fall 2025 campaign.





Bottega Veneta's La Tavola pop-up at Harrods.



Lewis Hamilton

Bottega In London

Take a scroll through social media and it's evident that Bottega Veneta is still everywhere.

The Italian luxury brand soft launched what to expect ahead of creative director Louise Trotter's debut in September on the red carpet of the Venice Film Festival with the likes of brand ambassador Jacob Elordi, in a head-to-toe white number, and Luxembourgish-German actor Vicky Krieps in a black sculptural dress with leather trimmings.

There are more clues, starting with Bottega Veneta's La Tavola pop-up at Harrods running until Sept. 28.

The brand has taken over the exhibition windows at the department store in Knightsbridge to celebrate 50 years of its signature leather weave, Intrecciato.

True to Bottega Veneta fashion, the interiors of the pop-up have been inspired by the worktables of the Montebello ateliers with splashes of materials including Italian wood, supple leather, concrete and soft leather Intrecciato seating. The walls are decorated with images from the brand's "Craft Is Our Language" campaign shot by Jack Davison.

The brand is maximizing its Intrecciato technique with an exclusive capsule collection of accessories and ready-to-wear pieces in emerald green and Barolo, a wine-like red.

Bottega Veneta's new fragrance collection, Mezzanotte, will also make its debut at Harrods with three new scents: Goodmorning Midnight, Almost Dawn and Hinoki.

"The pop-up space is really an expression of this timeless craft," said Leo Rongone, chief executive officer of Bottega Veneta, in an interview. "Harrods, with its own global reputation for luxury and its far-reaching

appeal to London locals and visitors alike, is an ideal home."

Rongone reiterated that as a brand without a logo, the Intrecciato has become the symbol of Bottega Veneta and its drive for craftsmanship.

"The 50th anniversary of the Intrecciato is really a double milestone — as we're also inaugurating a new creative chapter under Louise Trotter, honoring

the craft's remarkable heritage and ushering in new interpretations under Louise's creative direction," he said.

Bottega Veneta hasn't stopped pressing the gas pedal.

On Tuesday morning, coinciding with the Harrods pop-up, the brand released its Campana tote campaign with brand ambassador Julianne Moore and model Vittoria Ceretti in the second installment of the "Craft Is Our Language" campaign series. — H.M.

Padel Along

Erewhon is headed to New York City via Kith's new padel club, according to an Instagram post from Kith founder and chief executive officer Ronnie Fieg.

Fieg posted a carousel of photos to his Instagram page with the caption "KITH IVY. It's a thing." The post includes a floor plan for a luxury padel house featuring a boutique, a variety of wellness treatment rooms, including a gym, hammam, jacuzzi, steam room, sauna and cold plunge, and perhaps most notably a small section titled Erewhon. The post did not confirm details of what will be available at the Erewhon outpost.

Over the past several years, Erewhon has become the hottest grocery store in Los Angeles, known for its organic produce, hot bar and trendy smoothie collaborations with celebrities like Hailey

Bieber and Travis Scott. Given its virality, New Yorkers have been eager for the grocery store to open in the city. The hype for the store has also led to alternatives like Happier Grocery being dubbed the "Erewhon of New York."

Fieg's Instagram post showcased branded padels and sneakers, the space under construction, design elements and founding member cards. A Kith Ivy Instagram account also popped up on Tuesday afternoon teasing the opening of the luxury padel club and introduction of a padel brand. The Kith Ivy Instagram states in the bio that it is "a luxury padel brand and club where competition and community collide."

According to the account's only post, ahead of the official launch/opening, Kith has opened a padel court at Grand Central in Vanderbilt Hall where visitors can play for free. It will be open until Sept. 10. According to the post, guests can also get a sneak peek at the Kith Ivy collection which will include sportswear and "hard goods" created with Wilson. — EMILY BURNS

New Name

Formula 1 racer and frequent fashion collaborator Lewis Hamilton on Tuesday gave his career and business ventures management firm a new name to better illustrate its tie to the seven-time Formula One world champion. Previously known as Project 44, the company will

now exist as Lewis Hamilton Ventures.

The firm started managing Hamilton's business affairs in January 2024 and has since expanded to facilitate and support the racer on his business projects, racing career and commercial partnerships with the likes of Lululemon, Dior and Rimowa.

Lewis Hamilton Ventures also manages his clothing line, Plus 44, and Almave, a non-alcoholic blue agave spirit distilled in Mexico, with Pernod Ricard as an investor, as well as Dawn Apollo Films, a film and TV production company that's involved with the success of the recent F1 film starring Brad Pitt.

Hamilton serves as chief executive officer of the London-based company. The senior leadership team at Lewis Hamilton Ventures also includes chief operations officer Ross Connolly, global brand and communications director Jo Livingston, chief financial officer Moji Macaulay, chief legal officer Andin Fonyonga, and director of impact Jason Arthur.

The racer said the team is focused on delivering results and overseeing all the activity off the track, while his key focus remains on Formula 1.

Lewis Hamilton Ventures is also closely associated with Hamilton's charity organization Mission 44, which aims at building a fairer, more inclusive future for young people around the world. — TIANWEI ZHANG ▶



The Travis Scott x Erewhon smoothie.



A look at some of the new William Morris designs.

Past Blast

William Morris, the 19th-century textile designer synonymous with the British Arts and Crafts movement, is making a comeback with the completion of more than 40 unfinished, archival works by a team of London-based artists.

"The Unfinished Works" collection was unveiled this week by Morris & Co. and the Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens in California, which purchased the William Morris archive in 1999.

After discovering 50 incomplete sketches shortly after the purchase, Huntington approached Morris & Co., which was founded by William Morris and is now owned by the Sanderson Design Group, to finish the job.

Morris & Co.'s work involved researching the original inks, fabrics, papers and stained glass that Morris and his creative director John Dearle created in nearly two decades of collaboration.

The result is a collection of 42 dense, color-saturated botanical prints that appear across wallpapers, borders, fabrics, weaves and embroideries.

Morris & Co. said the team completed the pieces "with accuracy and attention to detail, honoring the original documents. Every design has been repainted in the studio."

One of the designs, created by Dearle, is called Cornflower and features his signature vine-like style.

An inscription in the margin of the original archive document reads, "Will something like this do/ for the suggested staircase paper/ a la vine tapestry?/ H.D."

The Morris & Co. team said the note signals "the wonderful artist-to-artist connection this collection embraces across the

centuries. Cornflower is a celebration of florals, featuring tulips, acanthus, daisies and, of course, the cornflower itself."

Jess Clayworth, lead designer of Morris & Co., said she hopes Morris and Dearle "would be proud that we've followed the design trail they set out, bringing these designs to life as a creative team spread over the centuries. The 'Co.' in Morris & Co. is alive and well in The Unfinished Works." — S.C.

Fashion Show As Art

Rather than learning a new skill or budgeting a bit better, one of the V&A Dundee's New Year's resolutions is to get runway ready. In 2026, the museum's Scottish brand will introduce two new exhibitions: "Catwalk: The Art of the Fashion Show" in April and "Design and Disability" in June.

Exploring the evolution of runway shows, "Catwalk: The Art of the Fashion Show" will bring together catwalk pieces from labels including Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Chanel, Dior, Maison Margiela, Prada, Paco Rabanne, Louis Vuitton and Yohji Yamamoto. It will run from April 3, 2026, to Jan. 17, 2027.



Paul Poiret's mannequin parade in his garden.

"Fashion shows are more than just moments on a runway — they're defining moments in culture that reflect the spirit of their time, bringing together a multitude of different design disciplines including hair and makeup, set design, lighting, photography and many more," said Kirsty Hassard, co-curator of the exhibit.

"This U.K.-first exhibition is a celebration of over 100 years of catwalk history, exploring the underlying dreams and motivations behind the catwalk concepts, revealing how they've shaped not only what we wear, but how we see ourselves," she added.

A few months later, on June 4, 2026, the museum will open "Design and Disability," a show that centers around the designs and culture of disabled people. The exhibit will display more than 170 objects made by disabled, deaf and neurodivergent people from 1940s and onward.

"This exhibition shows how disabled people are the experts in their own lives, and have made invaluable contributions to our designed world," said Natalie Kane, the exhibition's curator.

"Design and Disability" aims to honor disabled life as it engages with creative practice, presenting a strong culture of making that has always been central to disabled identity. In putting this show together it is an act of joy and resistance," she continued.

— VIOLET GOLDSTONE

It's in The Bag

There's a lot to unpack for "la rentrée" in Paris' department stores, which have unveiled exhibitions this week for the back-to-school season.

After the jacket last year, Printemps is taking an in-depth look at the handbag in an exhibition set under the stained glass cupola of its Boulevard Haussmann flagship until Oct. 12.

Curated by Sylvie Marot and Marlène Van de Castele, "Sac, sac, sac. More than a bag"



"Sculpture" for carrying, Ikea x Virgil Abloh, 2019.

takes a look at the history, craft heritage and current incarnations of this item often considered a mere accessory.

Organized in 12 sections spread more than 8,600 square feet, some 200 items are on display, including designs from brands spanning from Balmain and Louis Vuitton to Coperni and 2025 ANDAM accessories prize winner Sarah Lévy, via the likes of Ikea or the French postal service. There are also sketches, patents and designs by students from Esmod International's schools in France.

A few blocks away, it's not just purses that French journalist and lifelong fashion enthusiast Sophie Fontanel is partial to.

In her world, anything goes, from classics like denim, trenchcoats, belt bags and sculptural leopard print coats — the one she has her eye on is from Duran Lantink.

Through the department store's Boulevard Haussmann flagship, she telegraphs her joy of discovering novelties and trying new things through a selection of season must-haves that come with videos inspired by her Instagram account, which has 465,000 followers.

Across the Seine on the Left Bank, Le Bon Marché tapped another famous French personality: comedian and actor Antoine de Caunes, who presented the 1990s "Eurotrash" program with Jean Paul Gaultier and was a cornerstone of the long-

running talk show "Nulle Part Ailleurs."

For the occasion, de Caunes revives one of his popular characters, a diehard redneck rock 'n' roll fan whose taste for tall tales is matched only by his genuine devotion to music. Throughout the store, the illustrations of French artist Zep, whose pen name is an homage to Led Zeppelin, serve as the narrative thread for the "Rock'n'Drôle" (or "Rock'n'Droll" in English) exhibition running until Oct. 19.

Selections span from secondhand finds from the likes of cornerstone Paris thrift store Killwatch and vintage specialist Brut, to 1970s-inflected tailoring from Good Morning Keith and eyewear fit for musical icons like U2's Bono and Lenny Kravitz.

The windows depicting de Caunes' "Rock Motel" evocation of icons such as Elvis Presley, Keith Richards and Patti Smith come alive on the second floor. Elsewhere in store, there is an installation from Harry Nuriev's Crosby Studios and a space by Paulin, Paulin, Paulin, the family business dedicated to developing and preserving the works of late interior designer Pierre Paulin.

Meanwhile, it's the City of Lights itself that La Samaritaine is celebrating with "Paris en Mode Capital(e)," a title playing on its position as the French capital and a pivotal place in fashion.

Running until late October, the event turns the department store into

a magazine experience, giving a fashion editorial-inspired spin to pop-ups for Moncler and South Korean label Time.

Fashion glossy Grazia's French edition is given pride of place with a showcase of famous covers, its archives and current trends. Editors of the magazine will also give a peek behind the scenes through workshops for visitors. — L.T.

Ruby Star

Beats, the Apple-owned audio specialist, kicked off September with a fiery new collaboration with Jennie of the K-pop sensation Blackpink.

Following a debut Solo Buds special edition unveiled last year, which became one of the brand's top campaigns of the year, the two this time around have issued a special edition of the wireless on-ear Solo 4 model.

Finished in a monochromatic matte red base, the co-branded model is a nod to the multifaceted artist's debut studio album "Ruby," released in March and featuring hit songs including "Like Jennie" and "Mantra."

The special edition features "R" and "J" details, along with an embellished ear cushion adorned with symbols inspired by the singer. Making it extra street-style ready, it is decorated with an attachable red ribbon, tied into a bow, on each side.

"Beats has been part of my everyday life and creative process, so collaborating with them in this way feels very special. I'm excited for people to experience my music in a new way through these headphones," the K-pop star said.

The style, priced at \$199.99, will go on sale on Friday in Japan, South Korea, China, the U.K. and the U.S. at selected Apple stores. It will also be available at Best Buy in the U.S., and on Coupang in South Korea on the same day. — T.Z.

Jennie stars in Beats Solo 4 Jennie special edition campaign.

